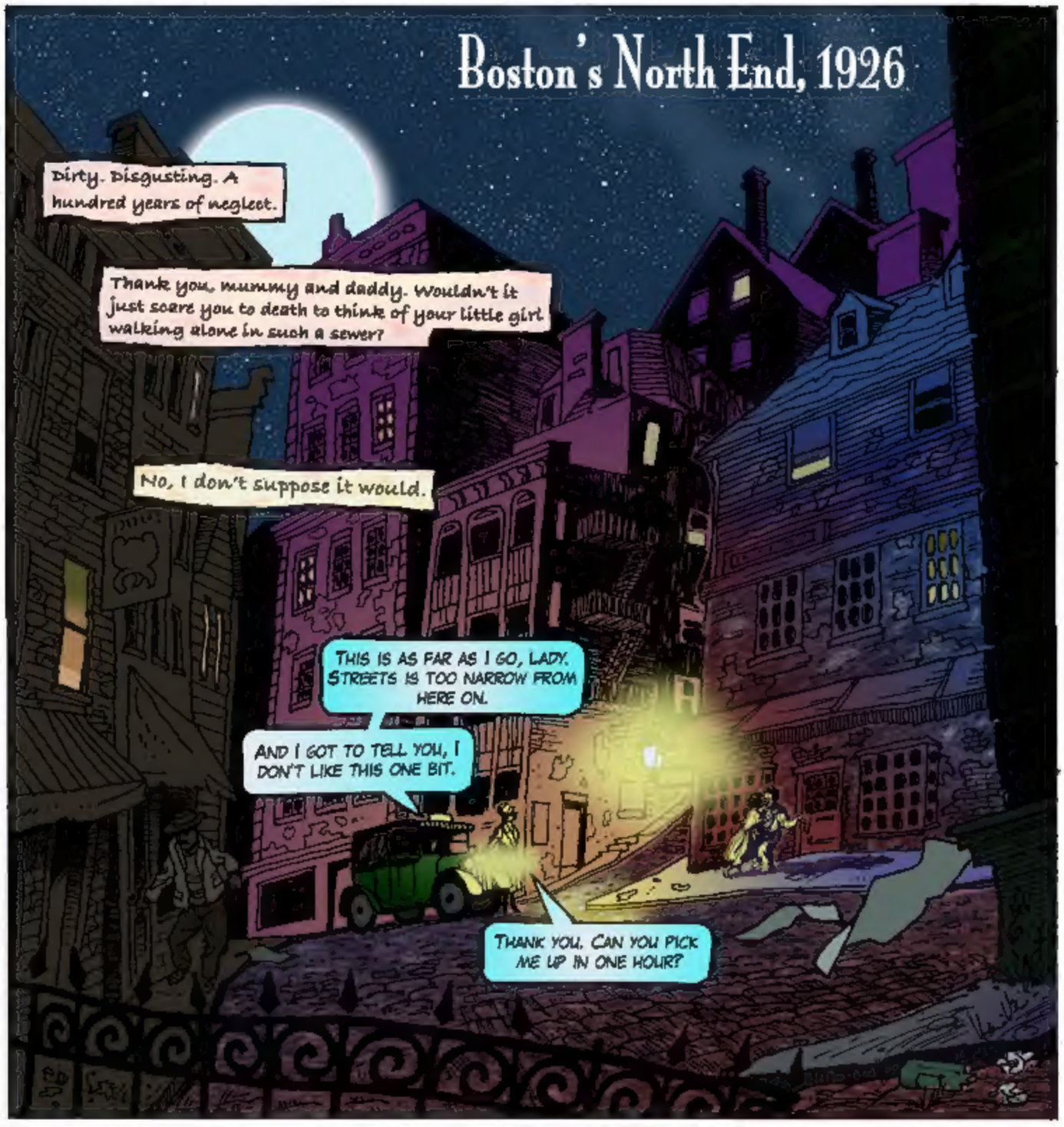
Lovecraft is missing

1. Innumerable Incidents of a Vague Nature


Boston's North End, 1926
Dirty. Disgusting. A hundred years of neglect.
Thank you, mummy and daddy. Wouldn't it just scare you to death to think of your little girl walking alone in such a sewer?
No, I don't suppose it would.
THIS IS AS FAR AS I GO, LADY. STREETS IS TOO NARROW FROM HERE ON.
AND I GOT TO TELL YOU, I DON'T LIKE THIS ONE BIT.
THANK YOU. CAN YOU PICK ME UP IN ONE HOUR?

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I'd swear I've gone in a circle.
But this seems to be the turn.

Ah! "Cross the park." How dramatic. Probably wants to renegotiate and this is supposed to soften me up.

BOSTON GLO

Oh, brother, have YOU got a surprise coming. Spooks and goblins, witches and ghouls....

...you'll have to do better than that.

Much, much better.

A. BRAMLETT
BOOK
SELLER

HELLO? MR. BRAMLETT?

MR. BRAMLETT, IT'S NAN MERCY, FROM PROVIDENCE.

Cat pee. Mold....

..And something else?

MR. BRAMLETT!?

SSrrrlllp
Sllrrpppll

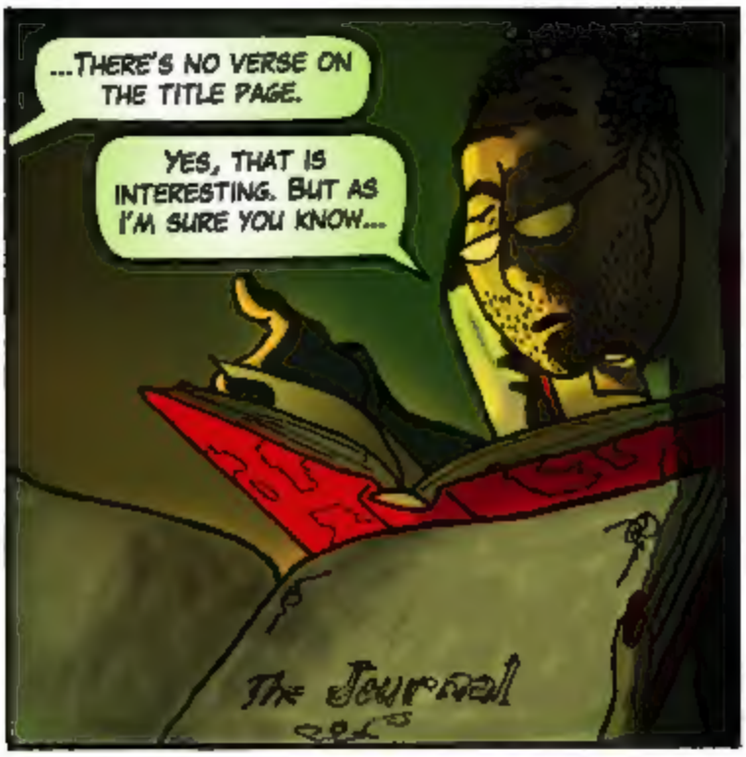
I REALLY HAVEN'T THE TIME TO WASTE, SO I'D LIKE TO CONCLUDE OUR BUSINESS AS QUICKLY AS...

...Ssssslurrrppp
ssslrrpp....

OHH!!!!

...E-EXCUSE ME...I WAS_

Aaaaiiiieeeeeeeeeee!!!!!
FATHER, CALM DOWN... THERE'S NOTHING TO BE AFRAID OF. THAT'S IT, CALM.....
MISS MERCY, I PRESUME?
Y-YES.
I HAVE YOUR BOOK.
THIS WAY....
..THE JOURNAL OF DR. ANGUS DEGROOT.
I ALMOST DIDN'T BELIEVE YOUR LETTER. YOU'D BE SURPRISED HOW MANY FRAUDULENT OFFERS I RECEIVE.
IT IS A VERY RARE BOOK. YOUR LIBRARY CAME IMMEDIATELY TO MIND.
HMMMM. FOLIO. REBOUND, PROBABLY LATE NINETEENTH CENTURY. BUT NOT A FIRST AS YOU DESCRIBED...


...THERE'S NO VERSE ON THE TITLE PAGE.
YES, THAT IS INTERESTING. BUT AS I'M SURE YOU KNOW...
The Journal

...THE ONLY OTHER EDITION OF THIS BOOK HAD THIS PASSAGE, AMONG OTHERS, EXCISED.
WITH OBVIOUS REASON.

THIS IS A VARIANT FIRST. AND THE PRICE IS FIRM.
IT HAS ALL THE PLATES?

ALL THIRTEEN. SHALL I WRAP IT UP?
YES.

YOU'LL LET ME KNOW SHOULD YOU COME UPON ANY OTHER RARITIES OF THIS SORT?

BUT OF COURSE.

Pages dry but not brittle.

Leather cover. Tobbin will be thrilled.

And when the time comes...

...it should burn nicely.

OKLAHOMA PANHANDLE
THE FUTURE'S BRIGHT
THE SUN DOES SHINE
OUR FRIENDS ARE NEAR
AND DOING FINE
TOUGH LUCK, OKLAHOMA POP. 726

TOUGH LUCK OKLAHOMA POP. 726
WHOOP HIS ASS, ORVIN
GO FOR THE NUTS, BOY, GO FOR THE NUTS!
YOU GONNA TAKE THAT OFF'M HIM, MILO?
SMACK HIM A GOOD 'UN.
OWWIEE!
SHIT FIRE!
COME ON NOW, YER FIGHTING LIKE A COUPLE GIRLS!
FEED
OOOF!!
GIT YER RAGGEDY ASS UP OFF'N THAT FLOOR, BATTLER. I'M JUST GETTING WARMED UP....
THIS AIN'T LIKE ONE OF YER STORIES, THIS HERE'S THE REAL DEAL....

I'M ---HRRRNNPPH!

WHAT WOULD YOU KNOW ABOUT MY STORIES, LARD ASS?

YOU LEARN TO

READ

OVER THE WEEKEND?

BIG TIME WRITER, ALWAYS THE SMART MOUTH. I'M GONNACLOSE IT FER YA, ONCE AND FER ALL.

YOU CAN TRY. IT'S A FREE COUNTRY.

YARRNNNNGGGHHH!

MILO, THAT'S ENOUGH!

LIKE HELL——!!

I DON'T LIKE TO REPEAT MYSELF, BOY.

PA!!

EVERYBODY BACK TO WORK.

NOW!!

'CEPT YOU, ORWIN. YORE FIRED.

AN' THAT DOLLY WHEEL IS COMIN' OUTTA YORE PAY.

MY P--!! MILO STARTED IT. YOU KNOW HE DID.

AIN'T GONNA CHARGE MY OWN SON NOW, AM I?

MR. BOWERS, I WAS COUNTING ON EVERY DIME FOR MY TRIP NEXT WEEK.

IN THE NAVY WE CALLED THAT A SOB STORY.

YOU GOT THAT RIGHT!

OW! WHAT WAS THAT FER?

'CAUSE I FELT LIKE IT. GET TO WORK AFORE I FEEL LIKE KICKIN' YORE ASS.

© 2008 Larry Latham

EDDIE, PAY BATTLER OFF.

PAYROLL

AN' TAKE OUT SIX BITS FER THE DOLLY WHEEL.

STILL HEADIN' BACK EAST?

YEAH. GONNA VISIT A FRIEND

WHEN YOU COMING BACK?

AS OF NOW, NEVER.

OR UNTIL MY MONEY GIVES OUT

WELL, DON'T FORGET THESE...UHH..

...HEY, THANKS FOR LOANING 'EM TO ME.

DID YOU READ MY STORIES?

I TRIED. I LIKE WESTERNS.

Weird Tales

HEY, WRITER BOY--

--DON'T THINK IT'S OVER.

OK BY ME YOUR PA CAN ONLY FIRE ME ONCE

MILO!

"MILO HAD JUST BOUGHT A ONE-WAY TICKET TO HELL."

NAH!

"...IT WAS TIME I SENT MILO BACK TO THE HELL THAT SPAWNED HIM."

GAS

I'M SORRY, WIN, BUT FOLKS AROUND HERE JUST DON'T CARE FOR SUCH.

CAN'T YOU KEEP 'EM ON THE RACK JUST TILL I GET BACK?

WIN, NO ONE HAS EVER BOUGHT ONE. AND YOU'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO SELL YOUR CONTRIBUTOR COPIES ANYHOO.

I'M PROUD OF YOU. THEY'S A LOTTA FOLKS IN TOWN AS CAN'T WRITE A LETTER, MUCH LESS GET PAID FOR IT

BUT IT'S A DECENT, GOD-FEARING TOWN. THEY WON'T PAY MONEY FOR SPOOKY STORIES

P O S T

© 2008 Larry Latham

WHYN'T YOU WRITE SOME WESTERN STORIES, THAT'S WHAT FOLKS AROUND HERE LIKE.
I WRITE 'EM. I WRITE ALL KINDS OF STORIES. BUT THESE ARE THE ONES THAT SELL.
THESE ARE THE ONES I'M GOOD AT
...AND YOUR CHANGE. THANK YOU, MIZ HURTER.
TRASH.
WELL, ME, I LIKE WESTERNS.
THEM BOWERS NEVER WAS WORTH A'LICK OF SPIT, EVEN WHEN I---
NOT NOW, MA. I NEED TO GET THIS FINISHED SO I CAN TAKE IT WITH ME.
LETTER CAME FOR YOU TODAY FROM YOUR FRIEND BACK EAST
JUST TOSS IT ON THE BED.
I'M ALMOST DONE.
ALL RIGHT DON'T BE UP TOO LATE.
YOU KNOW OL' COTTON, THAT BUS'LL BE RIGHT ON TIME.
H. P. Lovecraft
No. 10 Barnes St
Providence, Rhode Island
Mr. Owen
R.R. 2
Tough Luck
The carnage at the camp was worse than I feared.

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That meant only one thing: Milo had entered the Mound. Alone.
All the secrets of that unknowable presence, all the terrible knowledge buried, with good reason, by this long-vanished tribe----
-- the tempatation had been too great for the pitiable remnant of Milo's soul.
the cairn, undisturbed.
The tomb was empty.
The mouldering stench of decay and death was stronger now than when we first opened the tomb, the silence deeper.
But then where was Milo ? I shuddered to think.
The inscription we'd uncovered hinted at fates far worse than mere death.
Suddenly, I was possessed of the driving certainty that I must cover the inscription reseal the mound
.and send Milo back to the hell that had spawned him.
But then, behind me: a soft slithering sound....
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PICKMAN.
NOT TO MY TASTE.
WE HEAR THAT A LOT. STILL, HE HAS FOLLOWERS, LIKE YOUNG WILCOX, AND COLLECTORS WHO ARE RABID ABOUT HIS WORK
ESPECIALLY SINCE HIS DISAPPEARANCE.
THESE WILL BE MORE TO YOUR LIKING. FROM HIS ESTATE, DONE IN HIS OWN HAND.
MAPS OF SUPPOSED PRE-REVOLUTIONARY WAR TUNNELS SAID TO EXIST BENEATH BOSTON AND PROVIDENCE
CAN YOU VOUCH FOR THEIR ACCURACY?
AH, NO. MR. PICKMAN HAD MANY PECULIAR BELIEFS.
BUT THEY ARE PICKMAN ORIGINALS.
MR. PICKMAN'S WORK IS NOT AS INTERESTING TO ME AS MR. PICKMAN HIMSELF.
...A MR. MARTENSE HAS EXPRESSED INTEREST.
I'LL TAKE THEM, OF COURSE.
EXCELLENT. SHALL I BILL THE UNIVERSITY?
NO.
THIS IS A PRIVATE PURCHASE.

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YOU BE SURE AND WIRE US WHEN YOU GET TO CHICAGO.

I WILL, MA.

HERE. IT AIN'T MUCH, BUT IT MIGHT COME IN HANDY

FIVE BUCKS! PA, YOU DON'T HAVE TO—

TAKE IT AFORE I HAVE YOUR MA WHOOP UP ON YOU.

YOU BE CAREFUL, SON...

...IT'S A BIG OL' WORLD OUT THERE.

"Hail, Orwinius,

Your dear old grandpa looks forward with marked anticipation

to your advent in Providence, anxious to put a face with the name he has come to associate with such fearsome shudders

Prepare for adventures undreamt of in that dusty, windswept village wherein you abide

Marblehead, Newburyport & of course, witch-haunted Salem are far from the Wild West, yet

Yäogha Hoth ddt 'la ... kan n'the ... kaaa' ... by

with a wildness uniquely their own. There is much to be learned

in those ancient and decaying towns, and a visit to them is indispensable.

As for your side trip to that bastion of commerce and crassness, Chicago by name--

I hope it will prove fruitful.

HURTER

© 2008 Larry Latham

Convey my regards to Messr Wright (the old pirate!)

God save the King!

Yr obt Servt, Lucius Theobaldus

HECK-FIRE!

--LATE

-- WET

--AND NERVOUS AS A LONG TAILED CAT IN A ROOM FULLA ROCKING CHAIRS.

THEY PUT THEIR PANTS ON ONE LEG AT A TIME, SAME AS EVERYBODY.

JOHNSON AD AGENCY

LEE, ERIC

MURRAY, WEEL

POPULAR FICTION PUBLISHING CO. $12 901

POE & KING, GENEALOGY ASSOC.

WEINER

WOOL

OUT of SERVICE

...ONE LEG AT A TIME....

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MARTHA, SEND THESE BACK WITH REJECTION SLIPS.

GIVE QUINN'S STORY THE COVER.

AGAIN?

ONLY STORY WE'VE GOT THIS MONTH WITH A NUDE SCENE.

I THINK HE'S ON TO US.

ANYBODY SEEN THE NOVEMBER LAYOUTS?

ON YOUR DESK.

HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO FIND ANYTHING THERE?

MR. WRIGHT..?

MAY I HELP YOU?

WIN BATTLER TO SEE MR. WRIGHT.

SOMEHOW I EXPECTED SOMEONE...DRIER.

FARNSWORTH WRIGHT.

PLEASED TO MEET YOU, SIR.

MR. WRIGHT?

MR. WENDT, I'VE TOLD YOU—

BELVAN, PLEASE.

BELVAN, DRIVING HERE FROM BOSTON WAS A WASTE OF TIME

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CUT YOUR STORY BY 10,000 WORDS AND I'LL TAKE ANOTHER LOOK.

BUT THE RHYTHM, THE STRUCTURE, THE PACING--

--WEIRD TALES IS NOT A LITERARY JOURNAL,BELVAN

ENJOY YOUR DRIVE HOME.

NOW THEN, YOUR LETTER SAID SOMETHING ABOUT A NEW STORY

GOT IT RIGHT HERE.

HOPE IT'S A GOOD ONE. EELY'S NOT FINDING MUCH WHEAT AMONG THE CHAFF THIS MONTH.

RIGHT NOW I'D BE HAPPY TO FIND SOME CHAFF AMONG THE CHAFF!

WIN'S ON HIS WAY TO VISIT HOWARD.

LOVECRAFT? NOW THERE'S A HACK IF EVER THERE WAS ONE!

NEEDLESS TO SAY, I HAVE TO OVERRIDE EELY ON OCCASION.

HOWARD IS VERY POPULAR WITH OUR READERS.

I THINK HE PAYS THEM OFF.

COME TO THINK OF IT, HAVEN'T HAD A SUBMISSION FROM HIM LATELY.

SOMETIMES IT'S LIKE HE DROPS OFF THE FACE OF THE EARTH.

H.P. Lovec
No. 10 Bea
Provid

BROWN UNIVERSITY, PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND

HERE WE ARE, FATHER—

--THE JOURNAL OF ANGUS DE GROOT

I APOLOGIZE FOR THE MISUNDERSTANDING.

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NO MISUNDERSTANDING AT ALL, MR. [redacted]. IT WAS [redacted] DISRESPECT.

YOUR ASSOCIATE DISLIKES THE CHURCH.

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

BUT NO HARM DONE.

THANK YOU, FATHER. IT WON'T HAPPEN AGAIN.

(—AND IT HAD BETTER NOT.)

(THESE BOOKS ARE NOT FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC—)

(—FATHER JACKEY IS A SCHOLAR—)

(WHAT BUSINESS DOES A PRIEST HAVE WITH OCCULT KNOWL—?)

(—WHOM WE ARE HERE TO SERVE.)

(AND WE WILL DO SO WITH A MINIMUM OF FUSS AND MAXIMUM COURTESY—)

(—OR 'WE' WILL FIND ANOTHER JOB.)

(YOU CANNOT LET YOUR PERSONAL PREJUDICES INTERFERE—)

DAMMIT!

DAMMITDAMMIT DAMMIT DAMMIT!

NOW WHAT?

HOW DARE YOU LET THIS HAPPEN!

I'VE SEARCHED FOR THIS BOOK FOR A DECADE!

LET WHA—???

© 2008 Larry Ludlam

THE PLATES!!!

ALL OF THEM! RIPPED OUT! THE BOOK IS NOTHING BUT GIBBERISH WITHOUT THE PLATES!!

IMPOSSIBLE!

THE PLATES WERE ALL HERE WHEN I BOUGHT IT LAST MONTH!

WHO'S SEEN THE BOOK SINCE THEN?

IT SHOULD BE IN THE REGISTRY.

LOVECRAFT, HOWARD P. TWO WEEKS AGO. I WAS IN CONNECTICUT.

LOVECRAFT?

I REMEMBER! ODD MAN. LOCAL. HE DIDN'T SEEM THE TYPE TO DEFACE...

WELL, APPARENTLY HE WAS...

HIS ADDRESS IS WITHIN WALKING DISTANCE. I'LL BE BACK.

DON'T FORGET OUR FACULTY MEETING AT FIVE O'CLOCK.

YOU SHOULD BE MORE CAREFUL WHOM YOU ALLOW TO USE YOUR MATERIALS.

FRANKLY, FATHER, I COULDN'T AGREE MORE.

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

DAMMIT!!!

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PUSS-PUSSS-PUSS

PUSSY-PUSSY-PUSS-PUSS

10

HERE, PUSS-PUSS-PUSS

POPULAR FICTION CO
PUBLISHING
310 N.

*...REGRET TO INFORM YOU... YOUR STORY, "THE CALL OF CTHULHU".....TOO ABSTRUSE...

ROOM TO LET

RUBBISH!

HOWARD, IS THAT YOU?

YES, AUNTIE?

I HAVE YOUR MILK AND COOKIES.

YOU ARE A GIFT FROM THE GODS, AUNTIE...

...TRULY YOU ARE.

TUSH. I'M TRYING TO BRIBE YOU INTO ACCOMPANYING ME TO THE LECTURE AT THE ATHENEUM TONIGHT.

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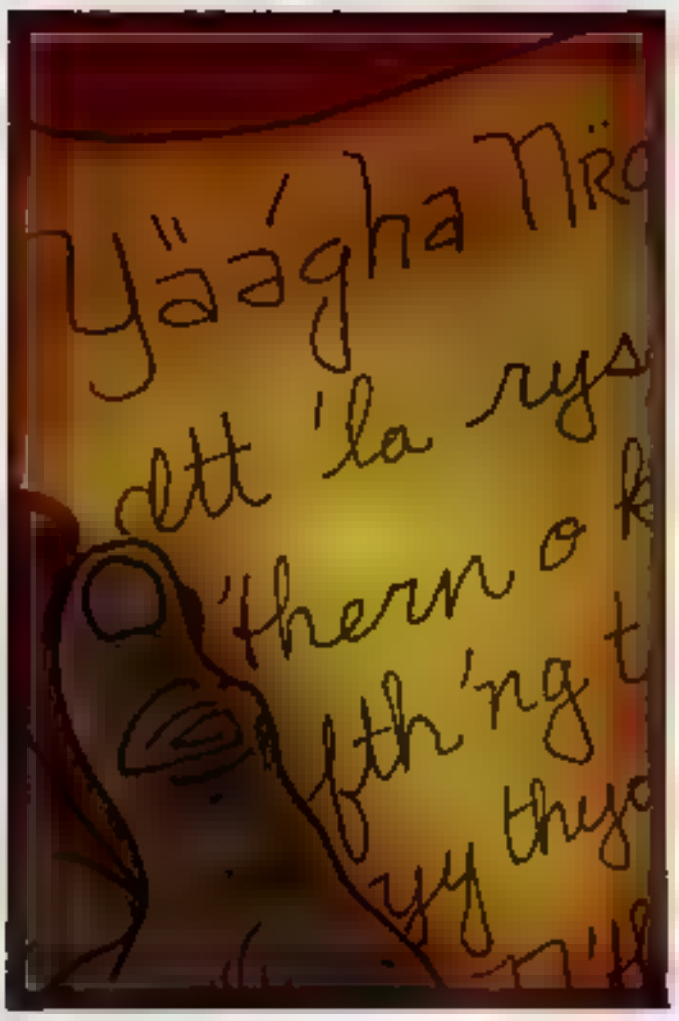
Lovecraft is Missing

2. The Obscure World



HER GRAND-DAUGHTER IS ONE OF OURS.
AH, THE WEB WE WEAVE...
ALL RIGHT, CHECK IT OUT
DISCREETLY!
BEGGING YOUR PARDON, SIR, I'VE ALREADY TAKEN THE LIBERTY.

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SEE THAT IT IS DELIVERED AT ONCE.

AS YOU WISH, SIR.

THAT SHOULD

SUFFICE

FOR THE PRESENT

PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND

HOPE HOWARD'S HOME. HE ISN'T EXPECTING ME UNTIL TOMORROW.

I SURE APPRECIATE YOUR SAVING ME A THE PRICE OF A BUS TICKET.

NO NO NO, IT IS I WHO APPRECIATE YOU, FELLOW SCRIBE.

THREE DAYS DISCUSSING OUR CRAFT HAS BEEN AN EXPERIENCE BEYOND PRICE..

NOT TO MENTION THE OPPORTUNITY TO VENT MY SPLEEN AGAINST OUR ANVIL-HEADED FRIEND, MR. WRIGHT

THAT'S THE POT CALLIN' THE KETTLE BLACK. WRIGHT'LL BUY THE STORY IF YOU JUST CUT IT DOWN.

AH, BUT THE BLESSING AND CURSE OF WEALTH IS THAT IT ALLOWS ONE TO REMAIN TRUE TO ONE'S VISION--,

--TO THE DETRIMENT OF ONE'S CAREER.

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FORTUNATELY, I HAVE INTERESTS BROADER THAN WEIRD FICTION TO CONSOLE ME.

NUMBER TEN BARNES STREET. NOUS SOMMES ICI!

YOU SURE YOU DON'T WANT TO COME IN?

ALAS, I HAVE A DATE IN BOSTON WITH A BOTTLE OF 60 YEAR OLD MCCUTCHEON. ANOTHER TIME.

WELL, THANKS AGAIN. I'LL WRITE YOU WHEN I GET BACK HOME.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

WAIT----

HOLD IT RIGHT THERE, MISTER!!!

HEY FELLA, WHERE'S THE FIRE?

YOU'VE GOT SOME EXPLAINING TO DO.

LRRONFFF...

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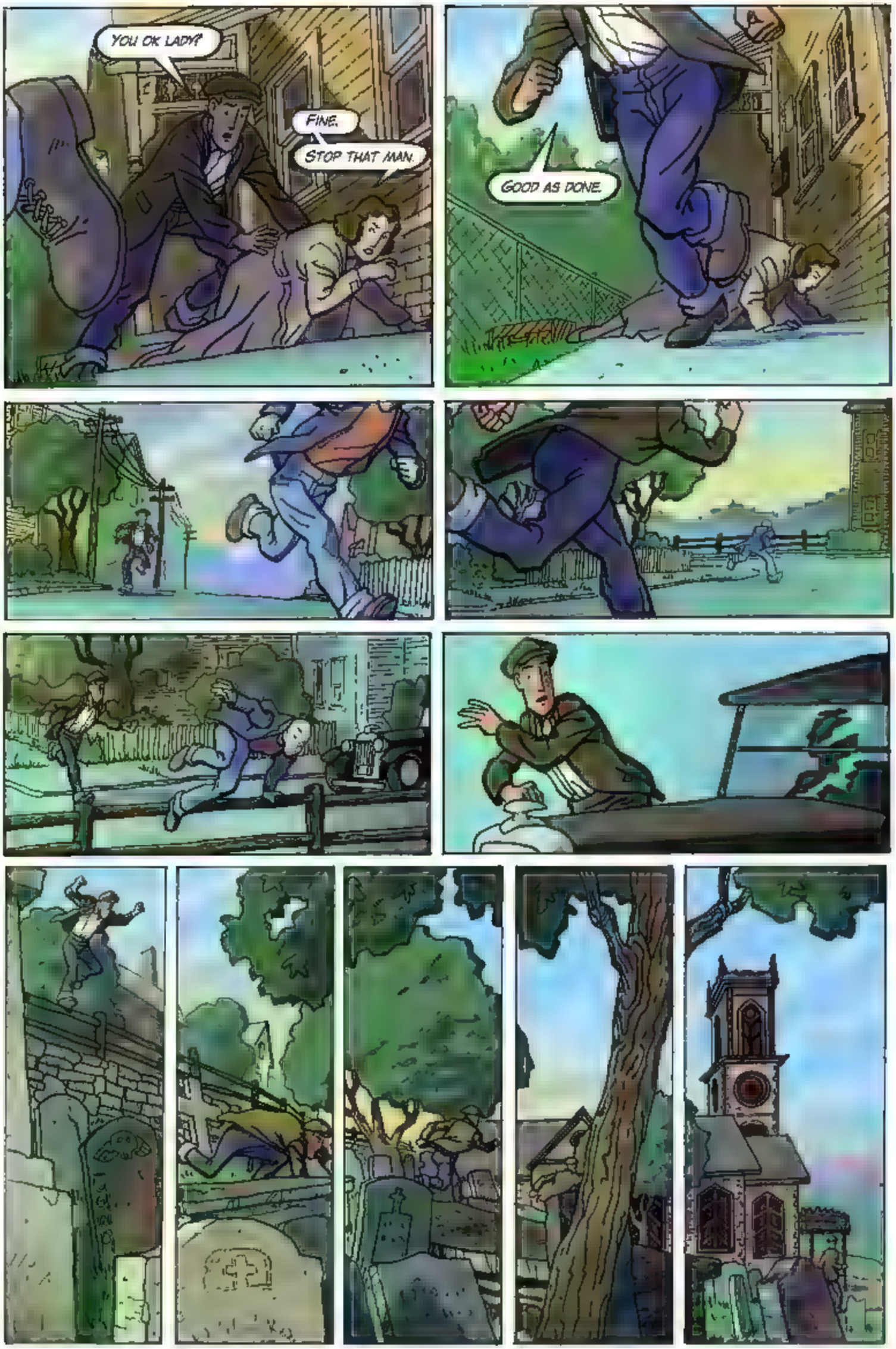

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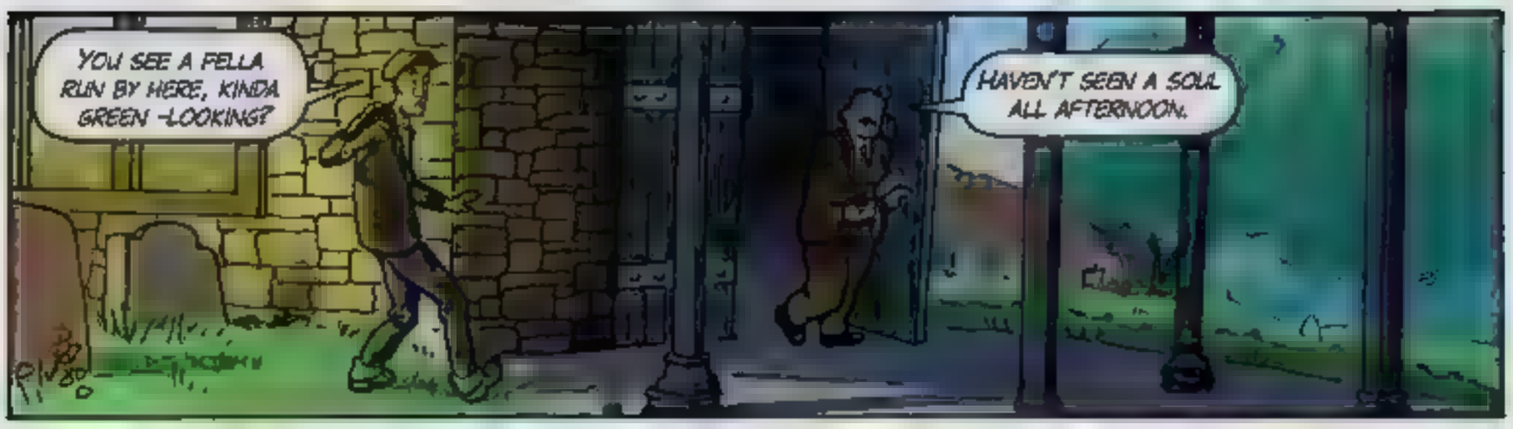

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People don't just vanish, Mrs. Clarke. He must have seen me coming up the walk.

It was twenty minutes before you arrived!

And he'd never go out without his hat and coat.

Oh, I have such a dreadful feeling about all this.

That door's the only way out of here. Windows are locked from the inside.

Howard Phillips Lovecraft [illegible] not crawl out of windows like a common schoolboy

I'm really not of a mind to leave here without those pages.

Is Howard in some kind of trouble?

He is with me

Why for?

He stole some rare photographic plates--

--out of a book at the University library.

The Promise of ALETHEIA

Oh he never would! Howard loves books.

Photographs of what?

Neolithic cave paintings purportedly found in Massachusetts in the 1870s.

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THE PICTURES ARE THE ONLY RECORD. NO ONE'S EVER FOUND THE ACTUAL LOCATION SINCE.

WHAT WOULD HE WANT WITH SOMETHIN' LIKE THAT?

THAT'S THE FIRST QUESTION I INTEND TO ASK HIM.

UNFORTUNATELY, I CAN'T WASTE THE REST OF THE AFTERNOON WAITING FOR HIM TO UH-VANISH.

I WILL BE BACK. HERE'S MY CARD----

WAIT! HERE, IN HIS APPOINTMENT BOOK. HE'S TO MEET A MR. THOMAS MALONE AT 6:30 THIS EVENING.

HOWARD WOULD NEVER BE SO RUDE AS TO MISS AN APPOINTMENT.

I HAVE A PRIOR ENGAGEMENT OR I'D---

I'LL GO, JUST DRAW ME A MAP. THERE'S SOMETHIN' NOT RIGHT ABOUT THIS AND THE SOONER WE FIND HOWARD, THE SOONER WE CAN CLEAR IT ALL UP.

CHEYNE WALK. THAT'S A ROUGH PART OF TOWN, NEAR THE WHARF

I'LL HEAD OUT SOON AS I FIND ME A PLACE TO BUNK.

I CAN ARRANGE A FEW DAYS IN STUDENT HOUSING IF THAT WILL SUIT YOU. IT'S THE LEAST I CAN DO.

A ROOF AND A FLOOR IS ALL I NEED. ANYTHING ELSE IS GRAVY.

GOOD DAY, MISS CLARKE.

DON'T WORRY, MA'AM. WE'LL FIND HOWARD.

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I'D ALSO LIKE TO SEND A TELEGRAM.

NOT A PROBLEM. I'LL DRAW YOU A MAP TO THE WATERFRONT BY WAY OF WESTERN UNION.

THANKS. JUST WANT TO LET THE FOLKS KNOW I ARRIVED SAFE AND ALL.

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.HOWARD?
NO SIR, ORWIN BATTLER. I'M LOOKING FOR HOWARD.
COME ON IN, HOWARD. GLAD YOU COULD MAKE IT
UH, I'M NOT--
I'D LIKE YOU TO MEET MY WIFE, MOLLY ..

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---WE MET IN CHEPACHET--
--WHILE I WAS RECUPERATING.
... AND MY SON, TOM. JR.
PLEASE, HAVE A SEAT.
I'M... NOT HOWARD.
OFFER YOU A DRINK?
NO THANKS
I'LL JUST HAVE A TEENSY ONE. SO, HOWARD, I MOVED BACK TO THE CITY. COULDN'T HAVE DONE THAT WITHOUT YOUR HELP, COULD I, GETTING IT OFF MY CHEST AND AL...
BUT DAMN ME, IT AIN'T OVER, IS IT? NEVER WILL BE OVER, WILL IT?
W-WHAT WON'T BE OVER?
...RED HOOK!
I TALKED WITH THE CAPTAIN. THEM BOOGERS WAS BACK IN BUSINESS IN TWO SHAKES. I DIDN'T STOP ANYTHIN', ...
JUST DELAYED 'EM A WHILE. NOW THEY'RE HERE, IN PROVIDENCE, PROB'LY ALWAYS BEEN HERE.

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...BUT THEY WERE ALL SPREAD OUT BEFORE, DISORGANIZED-LIKE NOW, WHAT WITH TELEGRAPHS AND TELEPHONES EVERYWHERE... WELL, YOU CAN SEE, THEY'RE GETTING IN TOUCH WITH ONE ANOTHER. ...GROWING...
---PRETTY SOON THERE'LL BE NOTHIN' TO STOP 'EM FROM SWARMING OVER ALL THE EARTH. YOU KNOW IT AND ... I KNOW IT.
YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE CAN STOP 'EM, MATE.
MR. MALONE, I'M JUST TRYING TO FIND HOWARD.
ARE YOU LOST, HOWARD?
WELL, ME TOO, MY FRIEND.
ME, TOO.
BUT HERE, I GOT SOMETHING FOR YOU.
GOT IT OFF ONE OF THEM SLANTY-EYED FELLERS, BEFORE I THREW HIM DOWN A WEL...
WHAT IS IT?
HOW THE HELL SHOULD I KNOW?
YOU'RE THE ONE SUPPOSED TO KNOW.

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TELL ME WHAT YOU NEED ME TO DO, HOWARD.

WE GOT TO DO SOMETHIN'

GAAAAAAA.

...FOR YOUNG TOM'S SAKE.

...BRRRRR--BRRRRR--BR-RRRR

GNNNGGHHHNGGGHH.

THE PROMISE OF TRUTH?

The Promise of ALETHEIA

THE PROMISE OF SEPARATING THE CREDULOUS FROM THEIR MONEY

I'VE NEVER HEARD OF THIS GROUP BEFORE. THINK I'LL POP UP TO BOSTON AFTER WORK AND SEEK ENLIGHTENMENT

MORE FUEL FOR THE FIRE, EH?

OFFICE

YOU COULD SAY THAT

I BOW TO YOUR RELENTLESS PURSUIT OF THE OBJECT OF YOUR OBSESSIVE ANIMOSITY. I TRUST THAT ONE DAY THIS PASSION WILL PRODUCE A MONUMENTAL TREATISE ON THE INTRICACIES OF THE OCCULT

BUT HAVE YOU EVER EVEN TRIED TO MEET YOUR SPIRITUAL SELF HALF-WAY?

I DON'T HAVE TO LIE DOWN IN THE MIDDLE OF A BUSY STREET TO KNOW IT'S A BAD IDEA

AND WHEN I DO FINALLY FIND WHAT I AM LOOKING FOR, I PROMISE, EVERYONE WILL KNOW IT.

IN THE MEANTIME, I'LL CATALOGUE THE LATEST VARIATION OF THE STANDARD HOKUM AND HOPE THAT MR. LOVECRAFT WILL MAKE AN APPEARANCE.

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Is he a Theosophist?
I looked at his books. Spengler, Nietzsche, Bertrand Russel, Bishop Berkley -- not your average Seeker after the Higher Mysteries.
Yet he'd marked this flyer---
Miss Merci?
Good morning. Any sign of our boy?
No ma'am.
But I was wonderin' if you knew anything about this?
It's hideous. What is it?
Well, to hear the fella as gave it to me tell it...
....it's the end of the world.
I don't recognize it and I've studied esoteric and occult groups for years.

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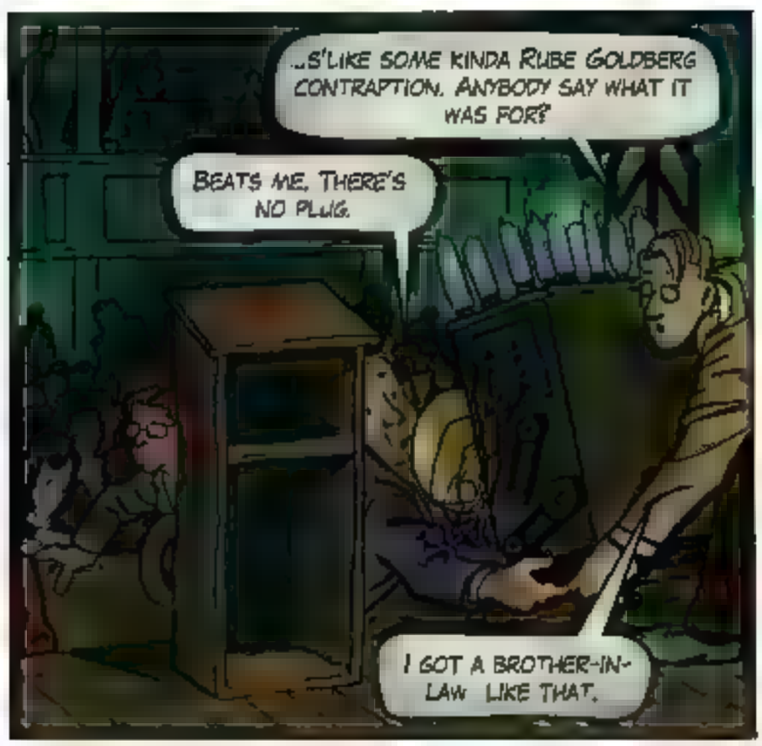
At best, Lovecraft is an amateur. What could he know that hasn't been in the journals?
And then there's the matter of the plates. Not a scholarly thing to do.
Could there be connection between the two?

Hard to say. There are hundreds, if not thousands, of cults, ancient and modern, and those are just the ones we know about. Perhaps they all spring from some lost, primal source. The mystics all say so.
Most everybody I know's Baptists.


..s'like some kinda Rube Goldberg contraption. Anybody say what it was for?
Beats me. There's no plug.
I got a brother-in-law like that.

Aletheia is that burst of understanding, the embodiment of truth, the true truth. Of course I knew all about it in my former life as an Atlantean princess. But it took Dr. Kartophilus to reawaken my consciousness..

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You know, I was an Atlantean Princess as well—
It doesn't surprise me in the least! So was Elizabeth Strout! Isn't that remarkable!
(Now we know why Atlantis sank. The weight of all those princesses.)
Ladies and gentlemen, or rather, Brothers and Sisters, Fellow Seekers of Aletheia, that radiant, ever-beckoning beacon that is nothing less than the Eye of God...welcome.
As our knowledge grows, so too does the prospect for that perfect realization of self, the true self, the Higher Being locked within each and every one of us. The true path lies through the narrow gate, but the gate has been obscured by centuries, nay, millenia of greed and avarice, of selfishness and hatred, of false prophets and religions.
But one man has pierced the veil, and returned with the ageless secrets of the Ascended Masters. His books have scattered like seeds, making these Mysteries available to every one who seeks it. And we are blessed tonight with his presence.
Brothers and Sisters, I give you—
...Dr. Kartophilus!
—What the hell?

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SIMPLE WORDS CANNOT BEGIN TO EXPRESS THE JOY AND LOVE I FEEL IN MY HEART
RATHER, I WOULD USE THE LANGUAGE OF THE ASCENDED ILLUMINATES--

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WH—WHA—WHERE—?
TAKE 'ER EASY YOU FAINTED.
HAS HE GONE?
WHO?
THE 'DOCTOR'-----
NO, THERE'S A RECEPTION---
HEY! YOU SHOULDN'T---
IT'S HIM, MUMMY, DADDY, AFTER ALL THIS TIME.
ALIVE!
BUT NOT FOR LONG
WON'T BE ABLE TO FINISH MY WORK NOW SHAME, REALLY.
HEY! THAT'S A GUN! WHAT ARE YOU DO--
BUT WORTH IT
ABSOLUTELY WORTH IT.
WISH YOU WERE HERE TO WATCH.
AND I HAVE PLENTY OF BULLETS TO GO AROUND.
IT'S THE BOY!

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I'M SORRY, BROTHERS AND SISTERS, THE DOCTOR HAS JUST RECEIVED AN URGENT MESSAGE. PLEASE UNDERSTAND, APOLOGIES TO YOU ALL.
THE ALLEY!
RIGHT BEHIND YOU.
I MEAN, THERE'S A GOOD REASON RIGHT?
DAMN!
YOU'RE NOT A LUNATIC OR
GO!
I'LL TAKE CARE OF FATTY AND MABEL HERE.

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RUN WHILE YOU CAN, DOCTOR. BECAUSE NOW I KNOW YOU'RE REALLY OUT THERE.
SHIT!
AND I'VE WAITED THIS LONG...
THEY AIN'T PAYIN' ME TO GET SHOT AT.
DITTO.
ARE YOU OK?
YEAH! WHAT THE HECK WAS THAT ALL ABOUT?
I'M SORRY. IT'S...PERSONAL.
I'D HOPE TO TELL YOU!
I THOUGHT MAYBE IN THE BIG CITY YOU JUST STARTED SHOOTIN' PEOPLE FOR THE HECK OF--
WIN, MAYBE YOU SHOULD GO NOW.
NOT A CHANCE. I'LL GET THREE STORIES OUTTA THIS--
YOU MUST DIE.
NOT IMPRESSED, SHORT STUFF, I WRITE LINES LIKE THAT FOR A CENT A WORD. SEVEN DAYS A WEEK. IF YOU THINK--

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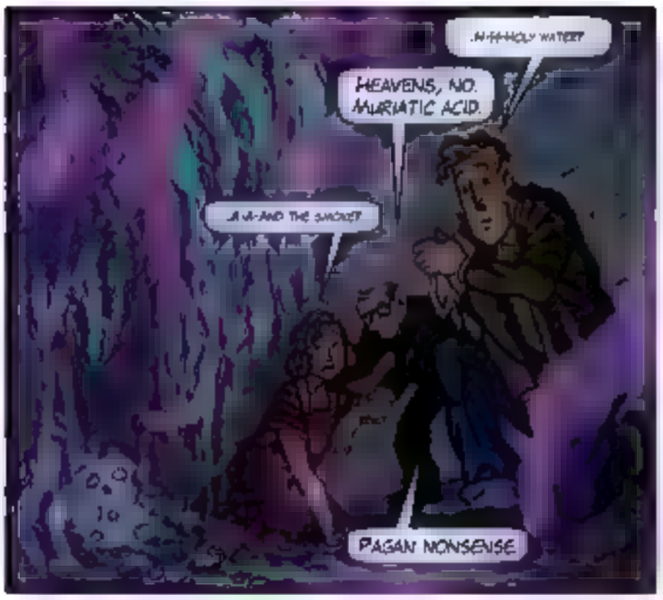
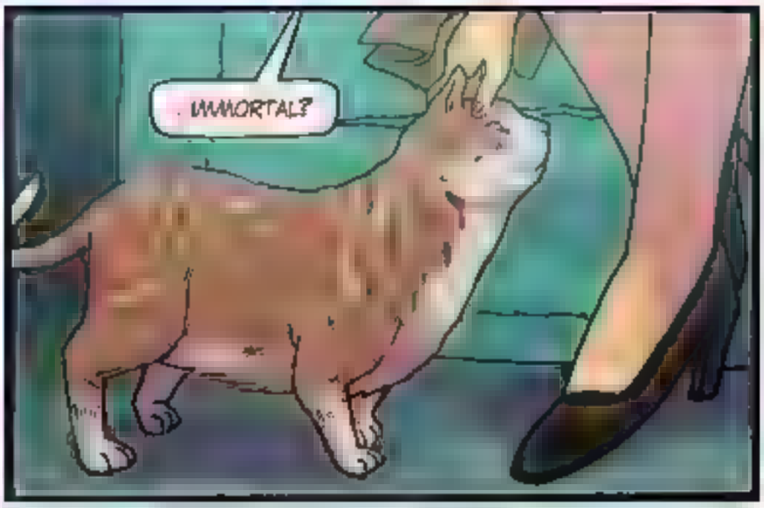
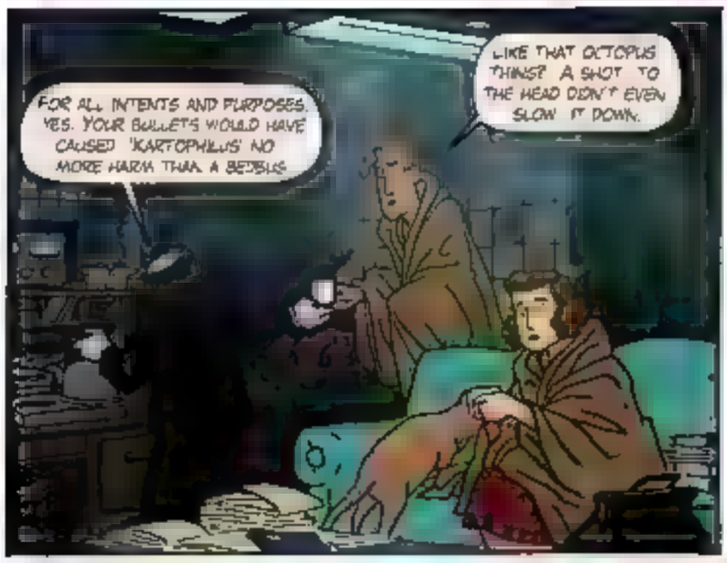
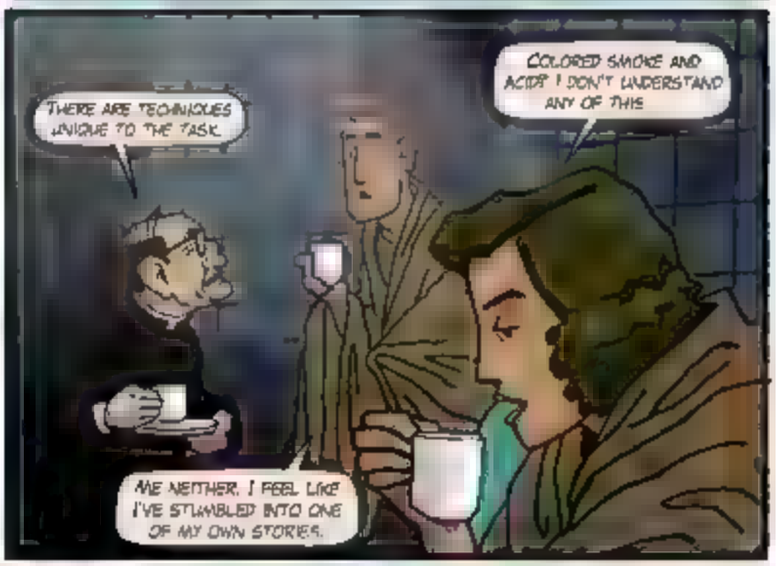


MY OFFICE IS NOT FAR FROM HERE. I THINK WE ALL COULD USE A NICE HOT CUP OF TEA.
--WHICH IS NOT TO SAY IT IS WITHOUT EFFECT IN CERTAIN SITUATIONS.




FOR ALL INTENTS AND PURPOSES, YES. YOUR BULLETS WOULD HAVE CAUSED 'KARTOPHILUS' NO MORE HARM THAN A BEESTING.
LIKE THAT OCTOPUS THING? A SHOT TO THE HEAD DIDN'T EVEN SLOW IT DOWN.


THERE ARE TECHNIQUES UNIQUE TO THE TASK.
COLORED SMOKE AND ACID? I DON'T UNDERSTAND ANY OF THIS
ME NEITHER. I FEEL LIKE I'VE STUMBLED INTO ONE OF MY OWN STORIES.

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I KNOW 'KARTOPHILUS' IS IMMORTAL, FIRSTLY BECAUSE OVER THE YEARS I HAVE TRACED HIS MOVEMENTS BACK IN AN UNBROKEN LINE TO AT LEAST THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY
'KARTOPHILUS' IS NOT HIS REAL NAME, OF COURSE. HE'S NO MORE THE WANDERING JEW THAN I AM.
BUT SECONDLY, AND PERHAPS MORE TO THE POINT--
I KILLED HIM.
TWICE
Y-Y-YOU'RE KIDDING, RIGHT?
BELIEVE AS YOU LIKE. WE HAVE MORE PRESSING CONCERNS AT THE MOMENT, SUCH AS WHY THE CREATURE ATTACKED YOU,
.. WHEN MISS MERCY WAS CLEARLY THE AGGRESSOR.
YOU SAY YOU'VE NEVER DABBLED IN THE OCCULT?
A HALLOWEEN CARNIVAL, MAYBE. THAT'S ABOUT AS OCCULT AS IT GETS IN OKLAHOMA.
I JUST CAME EAST TO VISIT HOWARD--
LOVECRAFT?
--WHO APPARENTLY VANISHED INTO THIN AIR A FEW MINUTES BEFORE I ARRIVED
HMM. I DON'T LIKE THE SOUND OF THAT
YOU THINK HOWARD HAS SOMETHING TO DO WITH WHAT HAPPENED TONIGHT?
A CONNECTION, YES. FOR GOOD OR I.., I HAVEN'T THE SLIGHTEST NOTION
BUT HIS NAME HAS BEEN TURNING UP WITH ALARMING FREQUENCY IN MY INVESTIGATIONS OF LATE.
THE TRYOUT
weird tales
H. P. Lovecraft
THE CALL OF CTHULHU
By H. P. Lovecraft
TIME IS SHORT WE MUST ASSUME THAT HE IS
WE? THAT'S A VERY LARGE ASSUMPTION.

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'WE' DO SEEM TO HAVE SOME COMMON GROUND, BUT 'I' AM NOT INCLINED TO COMMIT MYSELF TO A PARTNERSHIP

THANKS FOR THE RESCUE, BUT MOTHER CHURCH WILL HAVE TO FEND FOR HERSELF

AH YES. IT'S ALL SMOKE AND MIRRORS. AN OSTENTATIOUS, GAUDY FACADE FOR DUPING THE CREDULOUS.

SOMETHING LIKE THAT

GOOD REASONS IN SOME CIRCLES. NO DOUBT, FOR SHOOTING SOMEONE IN COLD BLOOD.

STILL, YOU MIGHT FIND THIS AVENUE WORTH PURSUING, IF FOR NO OTHER REASON THAN TO RETRIEVE THE DEGROOT PLATES.

AND ONE SHOULDN'T LET ONE'S PERSONAL PREJUDICES INTERFERE WITH ONE'S WORK

LARCH, Moland/Susan

AND NOW WE SHOULD GET SOME REST YOUNG MAN, YOU CAN USE A COT IN MY ROOM UPSTAIRS.

MISS MERCY, YOU'LL HAVE TO SHARE THE COUCH WITH NED

I CAN'T STAY HERE

OH, BUT I INSIST I DRUGGED THE TEA.

COME ALONG, LAD G'NIGHT, MISS MERCY.

IS THIS...WHERE YOU TEL...ME... NOT TO BE AFRAID. ?

HEAVENS NO.

THAT WOULD BE VERY BAD ADVICE.

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GEE. PA, WE HIKED ALL THIS WAY TO SEE A RUN DOWN OL' BARN
BOY YOU AIN'T GOT THE SENSE GOD GIVE LITTLE CHICKENS.
I TOLD YOU YORE DAY WUZ COMIN' AND THIS IS IT, SO QUIT DRAGGIN' YOUR ASS.
OK, PA. I JUST CAN'T SEE WHY WE HAD TO LEAVE THE TRUCK BACK AT THE CROSSINS.
I GOT MY REASONS, THAT'S ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW.
M-MAZ HURTER?
Y'AKHNAAN N'H'OTYA MTAN.
OTYA MTAN NHGTTHAN
SKIN DOWN, BOY
YORE ABOUT TA GIT RELIGION.
TO BE CONTINUED
Lovecraft is missing
Book 3: Whispers of Their Secrets
starts Wednesday, May 27, 2009
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Lovecraft is Missing

Book 3 : Whispers of Their Secrets

THERE'S A YOUNG MAN IN YOUR LIFE.

..ER...YES

MMM-HMM. I THOUGHT SO

..ONE MESSAGE...

Have you heard from Howard last three days? Urgent. Wire collect soonest Win

YOU'RE VERY CLOSE TO YOUR PARENTS....

..Y-YES. HOW DID YOU KNOW?

THE BOARD NEVER LIES, MISS NESBITT

...SIX RECIPIENTS...

Greene
M. Eddy
uel Loveman
rank B. Long
C. A. Smith
Ernie P
August Der

IT IS SUCH AN INTERSTING DEVICE, MRS. WEATHERLEY

THANK YOU. I MADE IT MYSELF

WITH THE HELP OF MY SPIRIT GUIDE, ASENATH, OF COURSE

OF COURSE.

---YOUR CHANGE.

THE [illegible] IS RIGHT OVER THERE

WESTERN UNION

YOUR REFERENCES ARE IMPECCABLE, MISS NESBITT

AND THE BOARD ATTESTS TO YOUR ETHERIC APPTITUDE.

THANK YOU. I'M SORRY IT WAS ON SUCH SHORT NOTICE. I DIDN'T KNOW I'D BE IN BOSTON UNTIL LAST NIGHT

OH, PISH-POSH. THINK NOTHING OF IT

I'D LIKE THE ARCH-DIOCESE.

THANK YOU, SIR. DEPOSIT FIVE CENTS PLEASE.

OUR TEMPLE OF ALETHEIA, AS DISTINCT FROM THE FRATERNITY RABBLE, WAS THE FIRST IN THE UNITED STATES.

DR. KARTOPHILUS PERSONALLY DIRECTED THE DECORATION. HE'S SUCH A MASTER OF SACRED GEOMETRY

VERY IMPRESSIVE. BUT DIDN'T CROWLEY----

SNF! THAT DREADFUL MAN! IT WAS SUCH
A RELIEF WHEN HE LEFT AFTER THE WAR. A TRIP HE DID
MUSIC FOR THE HARMONIC UNIFICATION.
THEY'RE REHEARSING IN THE SOLARIUM.
I'VE...UH...NEVER HEARD
ANYTHING QUITE LIKE IT
YES. LOVELY, ISN'T IT DR. KRETCHMER?

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---THEN WE'LL LOOK FOR YOU THIS THURSDAY. IT WILL BE A TRULY MAGICAL EVENT.
YES. IT'S ALL SO EXCITING. THANK YOU.
OH, PISH-POSH.
I NEED TO BE GOING. WHERE IS THE BOOK, DEAR HEART?
I PUT IT ON THE DESK, IN THE STUDY.
SPLENDID.
I ONLY HOPE IT DOESN'T FALL APART BEFORE I DELIVER IT.
VERY POOR CONDITION, CONSIDERING ITS--
--RELATIVELY RECENT ORIGINS.
AND YOU, MY FRIEND... MY TREASURE.
LET YOUR RAGE BOIL AND FESTER AND FEED UPON ITSELF A FEW MORE DAYS.
AND KNOW THAT YOUR MISERABLE, UNFORTUNATE LIFE WILL TERMINATE IN GLORY.
I APPRECIATE YOUR ASSISTANCE, MISS MERCY.
KNOWING YOUR DISPOSITION TOWARD THIS SORT OF THING, I COMMEND YOUR RESTRAINT.

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Still and all, I'm glad we left your gun at my office
Do not patronize me, Father Jackey. Kartophilus may be immortal. You are not
I'm sure you'd rather have Dr. K's head on a platter more than that of a doddering old papist like myself...
...especially given that Larch business.
Of course, that was a long time ago, and I don't have all the details.
Did you find what you were looking for?
I did. And under the most bizarre circumstances, I might add.
All this intrigue for a bottle?---
--And a piece of lead on a string?
Or is that a genie and I'm just not seeing it?
Oh no, much more than that
It's a human soul.
Really. Not as small as I would have thought
Yes, well...Kartophilus and his most devoted acolytes think it important
We need to know why
Poor Arthur. He would be so distressed to know he was part of this infernal business.
Arthur? Don't tell me, an old friend.
As dear as they come, young lady. And it is entirely possible that the delicate equilibrium of the world is balanced--
--on the soul of Arthur Jermyn.

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HMM. I THOUGHT WIN WOULD BE BACK BEFORE US.
HE SEEMS A COMPETENT YOUNG MAN. HE'LL SHOW UP
MRRRROOOOWWWWR!
WHAT IF KARTOPHILUS SENDS ANOTHER ONE OF THOSE TENTACLED HORRORS AFTER HIM? OR DO THEY ONLY COME OUT AT NIGHT?
YOU DISAPPOINT ME. 'MAGIC' IS NOT SO EASY AS THAT IT REQUIRES ENORMOUS RESOURCES.
YOU CAN'T JUST PLUCK A MONSTER OFF A SHRUBBERY
STILL---
WHAT'S THAT NOISE---?
WHAT?
NED?
NO, IT'S LIKE A MUFFLED--BANGING..
MRRRRR!
AH. SNOOPING, WERE WE?
HOLY CROW! I JUST STEPPED UP HERE TO HAVE A LOOK-SEE AND IT SNAPPED SHUT
THE FLOORBOARD IS PRESSURE SENSITIVE
IF YOU EVER HAVE TO USE IT, YOU'LL APPRECIATE THAT FACT
WHAT THE HECK IS IT GOOD FOR?
IT EMITS RAPID CONCUSSIVE BURSTS OF SOUND ACROSS 360 DEGREES
WHEN IT IS OPERATIVE, THE ONLY SAFE PLACE WITHIN A HUNDRED YARDS IS INSIDE
LET ME GUESS.

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--TO DISRUPT VIBRATION PATTERNS, AS PER THE SIGSAND MANUSCRIPT. I'D GUESS THE E.S.T GREY TRANSLATION.
EXCELLENT. I WITHDRAW MY ADMONITION.
I SWAN, I FEEL DUMB AS A POST AROUND YOU TWO.
AND THE POST WOULD HAVE A BETTER CHANCE OF COMING UP WITH A CONTRAPTION LIKE THIS.
TUT. NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR THE MAN WHO DOESN'T HAVE TO DO IT HIMSELF. I HAVE MANY TALENTED ASSOCIATES LIKE YOURSELVES.
THAT'S TEMPORARY AT BEST--
--WHAT'S THIS?
I WAS DOODLING, WORKING ON A STORY IDEA.
BUT THIS DRAWING?
THAT'S A STATUE THIS GUY, MALONE, GAVE ME.
MALONE?
THOMAS MALONE?
ER. YEAH. .WHY?
DO YOU KNOW HIM?
I KNOW OF HIM. DID THE STATUE BY ANY CHANCE..
--LOOK ANYTHING--
--LIKE THIS?

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CAREFULLY, CAREFULLY, YOU UNDERSTAND, YES?
WHEN THIS COOLS, YOU MAY PREPARE MY BATH.
MMMMRFF
DR. MUÑOZ--
THE COUNT IS HERE.
HIJO DE---!
AND OUR OTHER "GUEST"? HE WILL NOT TALK?
HE CAN'T THE SECRET IS OURS.
THE COUNT, HE IS NOT A STUPID MAN. IF HE BUT SUSPECTS WE WITHHOLD-
HALSEY, DRAW MY BATH, BUT DO NOT ADD THE SALTES UNTIL I RETURN, YES?
MMMRFF
I UNDERSTAND THERE WAS SOME TROUBLE--
THE MACHINE? IT IS ALL RIGHT?
THEY'RE UN-LOADING IT NOW
ALL RIGHT GET THESE IDIOTS TO WORK. HE MUSTN'T THINK WE ARE DRAGGING OUR FEET
AND SEE THAT THAT APE MAINTAINS THE TEMPERATURE ON MY BATH.
YES SIR. I'LL BRING UP MORE ICE FROM THE KITCHEN.
MORROWBIE JUKES
ASYLUM AND SANATORIUM

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MY DEAR ST GERMAIN, BUENOS DIAS.

I BROUGHT YOU A GIFT, MUÑOZ

[illegible] ANOTHER DRIVER

I COULD ONLY KEEP THIS ONE ALIVE LONG ENOUGH TO GET ME HERE

AH, WELL..WE MUST BE THANKFUL FOR THE SMALL THINGS

THERE WAS TROUBLE, YES?

OF A MINOR SORT

AH, GOOD, GOOD. NO DAMAGE!

A VERY IMPORTANT DAY, YES?

IN HERE, PLEASE. LET [illegible] OF OUR LABORS.

--SOMETHING IS.. .IS WRONG!

THE ETHERIC ENERGY [illegible]

THAT SOUNDS SERIOUS.

NO! NO! IT'S JUST I—

—I MEET THAT [illegible] OF TILLERMAN'S.

NO, THAT'S NOT RIGHT. TELFORD? TILTON? I AM DRAWING THE BLANK.

TILSHMAN, I THINK YOU SAID.

BUT IN ANY CASE, THE BOOK HAS BEEN LOCATED AND YOU SHOULD HAVE IT BEFORE LUNCH.

TH-THAT IS WONDERFUL NEWS. I AM CERTAIN THE [illegible] ANSWER LIES THERE.

I HOPE SO. WE ONLY HAVE A FEW [illegible], DOCTOR. I WOULD HATE IT IF YOU WERE TO LET ME DOWN—

--BUT NOT AS MUCH AS YOU WOULD

I WILL NOT FAIL [illegible]

YOU KEEP YOUR WORD, I'LL KEEP [illegible].

THOUGH YOU MAY WELL CURSE ME FOR IT. IMMORTALITY IS NOT FOR THE FAINT OF HEART

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ONE MUST BECOME A CONNOISSEUR OF... CERTAIN THINGS.
BUT AT PRESENT, I REQUIRE YOUR AID IN ANOTHER MATTER.
I'M SORRY. IT'S PAST TIME FOR MY BATH. I NEED TO---
IT WIL..... ONLY.. TAKE
A MOMENT ...UHHHHH!!!
-HACHE-
--DO YOU...RECOGNIZE.. THE..WOMAN..?
NO, I HAVE NEVER SEEN HER BEFORE.
..CAN'T .UNNNNNNH.
COUNT!
...EXHAUSTED...APPARENTLY THE TROUBLE.. WAS NOT AS MINOR AS I THOUGHT.
POOR HEEG....I FEEL AS IF I'VE LOST A. ...PART... OF MYSELF
HEEG? WHAT IS HEEG?
TRUST ME ON THIS, DOCTOR YOU DON'T WANT TO KN--
OUCH!
THE SALTES FROM ORDINARY SPECEMINS ARE NOT SO EFFICACIOUS AS THOSE YOU PROVIDE. I MUST GO..
WAIT!..I'LL.. GO WITH YOU..
B-BUT..Y YOU MUSTN'T TROUBLE YOURSELF---
RELAX, MUÑOZ. I AM NOT A VOYEUR.
PERHAPS YOUR ASSISTANT CAN TAKE ME TO VISIT OUR GUEST
DON'T ANY A' YOU PEOPLE SPEAK-A DA ENGLISH?
BOOKSTORE, YA DUMB DAGO! BOOK-A STORE A!
YEAH, HURRY HOME, EAT YOUR SPAGET
SPAGET' FOR BRAINS, YA STUPID WOP
HE AIN'T THE ONE AS IS LOST, NOW IS HE?
YEAH? EVEN IF WE FIND THE DAMN PLACE, WE'LL BE ALL NIGHT FINDING OUR WAY OUTTA THIS RAT'S NEST
GALVEZ--
SHUT UP
YESSIR!

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STEP ALONG, CATFISH---
HELL IS SO MUCH MORE EFFICIENT THANKS TO HENRY FORD.
STILL BETTER THAN THEY DESERVE. FEEBLE MINDED MONGRELS, ALL OF THEM.
IT'S JEW BLOOD THAT DOES IT
BUT WE'LL SOON TAKE CARE OF THAT, EH, SIR?
OH NO DOUBT
BEGGING YOUR PARDON. THIS GENTLEMAN SAID IT WAS URGENT---
I HAVE THE BOOK, SIR
OH, EXCELLENT
THE WRITING IS SO FADED. JUST LIKE THE OTHERS. IT'S A WONDER MUNOZ CAN GET ANYTHING USEFUL OUT OF THEM.
I AM SO PRIVILEGED TO BE PART OF THE GREAT WORK, SIR.
I CAN BARELY MAKE OUT...AH! HERE WE ARE. TELLING. .GHOST
TO THINK THAT HUMANKIND WILL AT LAST SLOUGH OFF THE SHACKLES OF SHORT-SIGHTED IDEOLOGIES AND RELIGOUS DOGMA, TO ATTAIN THE PEACE AND GLORY THAT IS ITS DUE. IT FIRES THE BLOOD--
IT HAS TAKEN THOUSANDS OF YEARS FOR THE STARS TO
YES, YES, WONDERFUL.
HAS HE REVEALED THE LOCATION OF THE DEVICE?
I'M NOT SURE HE KNOWS IT BUT I'LL HAPPILY KEEP ON TRYING
HE KNOWS HE COULDN'T COMPOSE WITHOUT IT
SUCH A SHAME. UNCOMMON TALENT
PERHAPS THIS WILL LIFT YOUR SPIRITS, SIR. FRESH OFF THE STANDS.
WHY, HOW THOUGHTFUL OF YOU. I DO SO LOVE THIS MAGAZINE.
AND THANK YOU, TOO, FOR BOTH THE BOY'S PICTURE - IT PROVED QUITE TIMELY - AND THE PROCUREMENT OF THE BOOK BY. WHATEVER HIS NAME WAS.
CARL, I THINK I MUST SAY, THE BOOKSELLER WAS RELUCTANT TO PART WITH IT.

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ST LOUIS - 1908
ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE AMERICAN ANTHROPOLOGY ASSOCIATION.
LEADS ME TO CONCLUDE THAT THE MAYA-NAGA HAD DEVELOPED A LOGOGRAPHIC WRITING SYSTEM SOME TWO THOUSAND YEARS BEFORE THE ADVENT OF AGHARIAN CUNEIFORM.
BUT I'D VERY MUCH LIKE TO HEAR ARGUMENTS AGAINST SUCH AN OTHERWISE PRIMITIVE CIVILIZATION ATTAINING SUCH A SOPHISTICATED LEVEL AT THIS EARLY DATE. FURTHERMORE, MY EXCAVATIONS THIS LAST SEASON POINT TO POSSIBLE OUTSIDE INFLUENCES WHICH ONLY COMPOUND THE MYSTERY.
MUNSFORD! YOU OLD DEVIL! YOU MADE IT!
I DON'T HAVE TO CALL YOU 'FATHER' NOW DO I?
NOT UNLESS I HAVE TO CALL YOU 'PROFESSOR JERMYN.
GOOD TO SEE YOU, ARTHUR.
COME ON. YOU'RE JUST IN TIME-
BUT I'M LATE AND I WANT TO HEAR WARREN..
HARLEY WILL STILL BE GOING THIS TIME TOMORROW
SOMETHING HAS COME UP SOUNDS RIGHT UP YOUR STREET AND INVITATION ONLY!
POLICE INSPECTOR? DABBLING IN THE SCIENCES THEN, ARE WE?
NO SIR. PURELY PROFESSIONAL CONSIDERATIONS.
LIKE BLACK JADE ONLY—WELL—
WELL THESE ARE THE BEST MEN IN THE FIELD
WE'LL SORT THINGS OUT FOR YOU
GENTLEMEN. YOU ARE ALL NO DOUBT CURIOUS ABOUT THE OBJECT PLACED BEFORE US.
ALLOW ME TO INTRODUCE POLICE INSPECTOR LEGRASSE, FROM NEW ORLEANS, WHO WILL ENDEAVOR TO ENLIGHTEN US.
ON THE FIRST OF NOVEMBER LAST WE RECEIVED AN URGENT SUMMONS FROM THE SWAMP AND LAGOON COUNTRY SOUTH OF THE CITY.
THERE'S A SHANTY TOWN THERE, WELL OFF THE BEATEN TRACK SQUATTERS, VAGRANTS AND THE LIKE
THE LONG AND SHORT OF IT WAS THAT SOME OF THEIR WOMEN AND CHILDREN HAD BEEN ABDUCTED
..BUT BY WHOM OR WHAT WAS BY NO MEANS CLEAR

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TWENTY MEN, GOOD AND TRUE, AND I'D WAGER NOT A COWARDLY BONE AMONGST US. BUT GENTLEMEN, THE SWAMP AT NIGHT...
...IT'S AN EXPERIENCE ANY SANE MAN DOES HIS BEST TO AVOID.
THE ONLY WAY IN WAS SHANK'S PONY. ONLY OUR FOOTSTEPS BROKE THE SILENCE.
WE'D ALL GROWN UP WITH STORIES OF LOST LAKES AND UNKNOWN CREATURES DEEP IN THE SWAMP COUNTRY.
THEY DIDN'T MAKE FOR GOOD CONVERSATION.
IT TOOK AN HOUR TO REACH THE SQUATTER'S SETTLEMENT, THE MEN NEAR AS HYSTERICAL AS THE WOMEN. AND IT WEREN'T UNTIL WE QUIETED 'EM DOWN---
--THAT WE HEARD THE DRUMS. TOM-TOMS, RISING STEADY ABOVE THE TREES.
AND A SCREAM, INHUMAN, LIKE A PIG BEING SLAUGHTERED, YET ALL THE SAME--
--I'D SWEAR IT WAS SPEAKING.
THE SQUATTERS REFUSED POINT-BLANK TO ADVANCE ANOTHER INCH. BUT MY MEN AND I HAD COME TO DO A JOB, AND DO IT WE WOULD.

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WE WERE TRAVELING WATERS THAT HAD NEVER BEFORE BEEN DISTURBED BY A PROPER WHITE MAN.
STORIES FROM CHILDHOOD ROSE UP: A GREAT WHITE LUMP OF A THING FESTERING IN A HIDDEN, DARK LAKE
BAT-WINGED BOGEYMEN, NIGHT GAUNTS AND THE LIKE
THOSE WOULD HAVE BEEN PREFERABLE TO THE TRUTH.
I GAVE THE ORDER TO SPREAD OUT AND UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES WAS ANYONE TO FIRE UNLESS I GAVE THE WORD.

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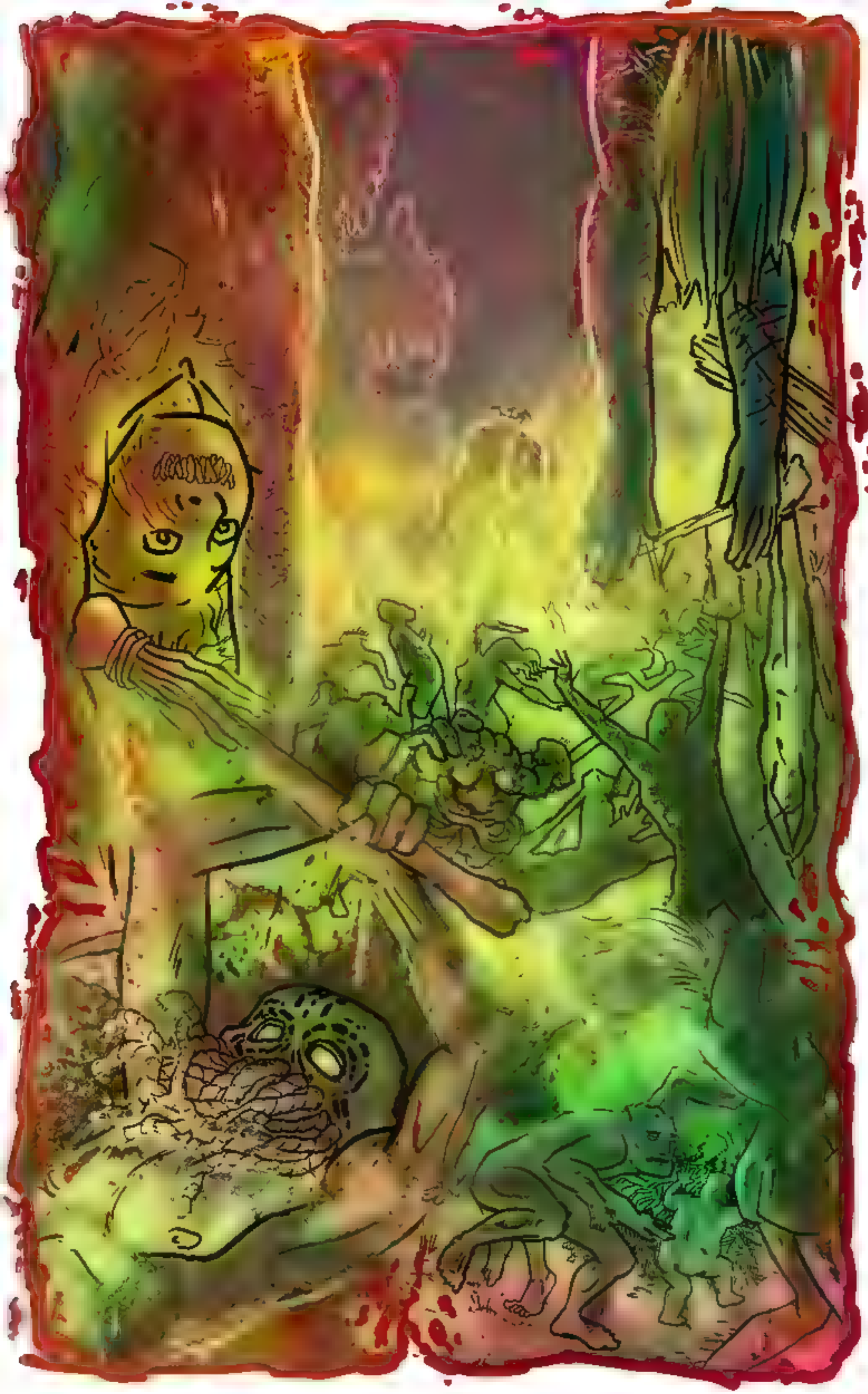

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ONLY A FOOL WOULD HAVE TRIED TO HOLD MY MEN BACK.
ONLY A DEVIL WOULD HAVE WANTED TO.
LESS THAN TWENTY PARTICIPANTS SURVIVED.
-WE WERE UNABLE TO PRY ANY FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THIS CULT FROM THEM. TEN HAVE SINCE BEEN HANGED; THE OTHERS ARE IN VARIOUS INSTITUTIONS.
FEARING THAT THIS OBSCENE PRACTICE MAY BE WIDESPREAD AMONG THE MORE REMOTE PARTS OF MY STATE.

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I'M TURNING TO YOU GENTLEMEN FOR ANY ASSISTANCE YOU ARE ABLE TO GIVE.
MUSTN'T LET THESE PRIMITIVE SUPERSTITIONS GET THE BEST OF YOU OLD MAN. OBSCENE BUT NOTHING TO FEAR.
WELL, IT'S CERTAINLY--
--MORE GROTESQUE THAN YOUR GARDEN VARIETY FETISH.
GIVES ME THE PRICKLIES.
I'D GO SO FAR AS TO SAY I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE IT
I HAVE.
MUNSFORD, REALLY?
YES, A WHILE AGO...
IN A DREAM.
MARVELOUS, ISN'T IT?
ABSOLUTELY MARVELOUS.
THE CALL OF CTHULHU
By H. P. Lovecraft
KOOT-LOOT
CHUT-UH-LOO-HOOT

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--KUTH-OOLA-TOO?
BEATS ME.
THE PRONUNCIATION IS OF SECONDARY IMPORTANCE TO THE DIFFERENCES IN THE STORY
OUR MR. LOVECRAFT HAS TOO MANY DETAILS RIGHT TO BE IGNORANT OF THE REST
BUT HOW? YOU SAID IT WASN'T IN THE PAPER.
NOR IN THE CONFERENCE NOTES. IT WAS OFF THE RECORD.
MY BEST GUESS WOULD BE ARTHUR OR, LESS LIKELY, HARLEY WARREN.
LOVECRAFT WROTE SIMILAR MIXES OF FACT AND FANCY ABOUT BOTH OF THEM, AS WELL AS YOUR FRIEND, MR. MALONE.
I NEVER HEARD OF THESE STORIES...
TWO APPEARED IN AMATEUR MAGAZINES SOME YEARS AGO; MALONE'S STORY, SUITABLY ALTERED, HAS NOT YET BEEN PUBLISHED.
BUT WHY CHANGE THIS NAME, KEEP THAT ONE. HOW DOES THAT MAKE A BETTER STORY?
THE ONLY ONE HE KEPT IN THIS CHUT-A-WHATSIS WAS THE INSPECTOR.
AND THE ARTIST, HENRY WILCOX
HE LIVES A FEW BLOCKS FROM HERE, AT THE ART CLUB.
THAT WILL BEAR LOOKING INTO.
BUT MY FIRST QUESTION IS WHY HE EMPHASIZED THE FETISH, EVEN TO GIVING IT A NAME--
--YET IGNORED THE SANTAPAU DEVICE ?
WHICH IS--WHAT?
--THE DOO-HICKEY KARTOPHILUS WAS INTERESTED IN?
AH! A CHANCE TO FURTHER YOUR EDUCATION. GEBER, TREATISES, LAUNET EDITION, VOLUME THREE, PAGE 820.
NOT MUCH EDUCATION IN AN UNTRANSLATABLE BOOK.
WHAT'S A JEEBER?
JABIR IBN HAYYAN --GEBER IN LATIN--AN 8TH CENTURY MOHAMMEDAN ALCHEMIST
THE USUAL MALARKEY LEAD INTO GOLD, LIFE FROM HERBS AND EXCREMENT--
WE, HOWEVER, ARE CONCERED WITH THE 3,000 TREATISES HE LEFT, ALL WRITTEN IN A VERY ESOTERIC PERSONAL CODE--
FOR WHICH HE FAILED TO PROVIDE THE KEY
THUS, 'GEBER' BEGETS GIBBERISH.

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HERE WE ARE.

AN ATTEMPTED TRANSLATION BY PROFESSOR LAUNET

There will come Seven (apprentices) clothed (
betrayal and destruction from whom poured th
owls. insects in the night, his (their?) blasphemies
in a book. Kitab al Azif

HOLY CROW!

...on from w
he night, his (their
ok Kitab al-Azif

..THAT'S HOWARD'S ARABIC NAME FOR THE NECRONOMICON.

-"--WHICH FORBIDS (THE NAME) OF ABDUL EL-AZRAD...(FOREVER.)"

--AND THAT'S A NAME--

INSECTS IN THE NIGHT

--HE MADE UP-- --I THOUGHT

..HOLY CROW...

ARE YOU SAYING THE NECRONOMICON IS....REAL?

OH HEAVENS NO.

A GRIMOIRE FROM WHICH ANY HALF-WIT COULD READ A SPELL AND DESTROY THE WORLD?

WOULD HAVE HAPPENED LONG AGO, I'M AFRAID.

BUT, PLEASE -- TURN THE PAGE.

LAUNET BELIEVED THE DEVICE WAS A COMPUTATIONAL ENGINE, CAPABLE OF DECIPHERING GEBER'S CODE..

The Santiqui Device, discovered off the coast of Chile. 1894. Date: circa 100 B

PERSIA TO CHILE? THAT'S A BIT OF A STRETCH, ISN'T IT

POSSIBLY--

--BUT A WORKING VERSION OF THIS DEVICE WAS AMONG THE ITEMS INSPECTOR LEGRASSE BROUGHT TO US IN 1908.

THE COMMITTEE ASSIGNED THE FETISH TO ME FOR FURTHER STUDY; THE DEVICE FELL TO ARTHUR AND HARLEY.

AFTER TEN YEARS STUDY, THEY WERE READY TO PUBLISH THEIR FINDINGS WHEN--

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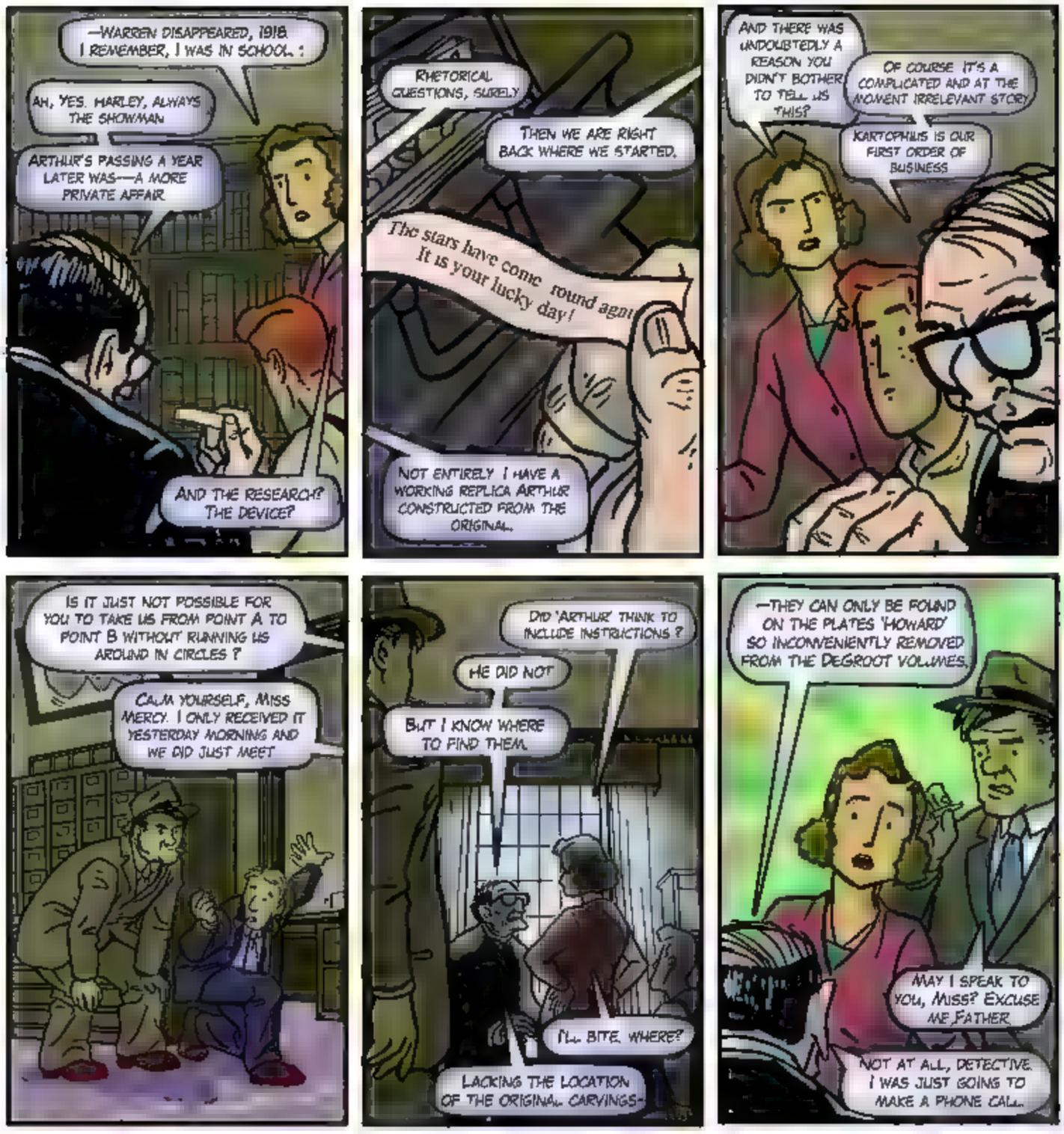
—WARREN DISAPPEARED, 1918. I REMEMBER, I WAS IN SCHOOL...
AH, YES. HARLEY, ALWAYS THE SHOWMAN
ARTHUR'S PASSING A YEAR LATER WAS—A MORE PRIVATE AFFAIR
AND THE RESEARCH? THE DEVICE?
RHETORICAL QUESTIONS, SURELY
THEN WE ARE RIGHT BACK WHERE WE STARTED.
The stars have come round again. It is your lucky day!
NOT ENTIRELY. I HAVE A WORKING REPLICA ARTHUR CONSTRUCTED FROM THE ORIGINAL.
AND THERE WAS UNDOUBTEDLY A REASON YOU DIDN'T BOTHER TO TELL US THIS?
OF COURSE. IT'S A COMPLICATED AND AT THE MOMENT IRRELEVANT STORY
KARTOPHILIS IS OUR FIRST ORDER OF BUSINESS
IS IT JUST NOT POSSIBLE FOR YOU TO TAKE US FROM POINT A TO POINT B WITHOUT RUNNING US ARDUND IN CIRCLES ?
CALM YOURSELF, MISS MERCY. I ONLY RECEIVED IT YESTERDAY MORNING AND WE DID JUST MEET
DID 'ARTHUR' THINK TO INCLUDE INSTRUCTIONS ?
HE DID NOT
BUT I KNOW WHERE TO FIND THEM.
I'LL BITE. WHERE?
LACKING THE LOCATION OF THE ORIGINAL CARVINGS-
—THEY CAN ONLY BE FOUND ON THE PLATES 'HOWARD' SO INCONVENIENTLY REMOVED FROM THE DEGROOT VOLUMES.
MAY I SPEAK TO YOU, MISS? EXCUSE ME FATHER
NOT AT ALL, DETECTIVE. I WAS JUST GOING TO MAKE A PHONE CALL.
DR. TOBIN WILL BE IN THE HOSPITAL FOR A FEW DAYS BUT HE'LL BE OK. WOULD YOU SEE GET ME AN INVENTORY PAPER
OF COURSE ANYTHING
...INGGG—
...LIKE TRYING TO READ HEN-SCRATCH!
...and land a seeker of
...id. I did take
...multitudinous
...from the world.
"And this apprentice, revealed as the Seventh, born to betray and sow destruction, from his mouth poured the sounds of insects in the night, the cries of demons, and blasphemed again Allah and His Prophet, and wrote ut his blasphemies in a book Kitab al-azif so that the name of Abdul el-Azrad will be for stricken from the rolls of

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HUH?..UH...YEAH,...WHA..?
CHINESE FOOD NOT AGREEING WITH YOU, LADY
NO...I DON'T KNOW...
IF MALONE AND WILCOX ARE OUR ONLY LEADS, I SUGGEST WE SPLIT UP--
--AND RENDEZVOUS TOMORROW MORNING.
I'LL GET YOU A ROOM AT THE DORM.
EXCELLENT
PERHAPS TOMORROW WE CAN ALSO VISIT MR. LOVECRAFT'S APARTMENT.
I'LL CALL HIS AUNT BEFORE I GO SEE WILCOX.
I'LL GO WITH YOU, I CAN--
ACTUALLY, I'LL NEED YOU TO COME WITH ME.
OR I CAN GO WITH MISS MERCY, SINCE YOU HAVE A PRIOR RELATIONSHIP WITH MALONE...
UH...NO, I'LL GO WITH YOU..SURE...
..LEMME GET MY CAP...
COMING, YOUNGSTER ?
(THEY NEVER HEARD OF HIM.)

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RETRIBUTION

FORM AND INTONATIONS

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YOU'RE SURE YOU'RE ALL RIGHT?
IT'S, LIKE...I'M DAY DREAM--??
--PROB'LY JUST TUCKERED..
YES, WELL, AS I WAS SAYING--
--THESE ARE THE CONSTITUENTS OF SO-CALLED MAGIC. YOU IGNORE THEM AT YOUR PERIL.
BUT THEY CAN BE DISGUISED IN MANY DIFFERENT WAYS.
AVE CAESAR! MORITURI TE SALUTAMUS
NON EST AD ASTRA MOLLIS E TERRIS VIA.
THANK YOU FOR COMING ON SUCH SHORT NOTICE, WALTER.
LIKE EDGAR.
.LONG AS I DONT HAVE TO DEAL WITH THE $MITTENS.
I'M CERTAIN THEY ARE EQUALLY RELUCTANT FOR FURTHER CONTACT
THEY ARE IF THEY'RE TAKING THEIR SMART PILLS.
SO, I'M ALL EARS..
I NEED YOU TO FIND LUTHER FICKES--
AND GIVE HIM--
--THIS.
WAIT FOR A REPLY.
LIKE DON QUIXOTE
EXCEPTING THAT OUR WINDMILLS MIGHT INDEED BE GIANTS.
TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE FIND HIM.
LIKE JAVERT
BE IN TOUCH.
BY THE WAY, READ SOME OF THOSE STORIES YOU SENT ME
STORIES?

PANEL 3: "HAIL, CEASAR! WE WHO ARE ABOUT TO DIE SALUTE YOU." "THERE IS NO EASY WAY FROM THE EARTH TO THE STARS."

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THAT POE WANNA-BE, ODD NAME ..LOVECRAFT ..
NOT IMPRESSED, BUT I'LL GIVE 'IM ANOTHER TRY
OH PLEASE DO ; LOOK FORWARD TO YOUR THOUGHTS..
LIKE DUPIN.
WELL-READ FELLA. YOU DIDN'T INTRODUCE US.
WALTER COW IS NOT SOMEONE YOU WANT TO KNOW.
WHYZZAT? IS HE A GANGSTER? LOOKS LIKE ONE ANYWAY
WALTER? OH HEAVENS NO.
HE'S A BARBER
BUT THERE ARE MANY DIFFERENT WAYS TO BE DANGEROUS.
FOR EXAMPLE, I DIDN'T SEND HIM ANY STORIES.
MUMMY DADDY, YOU UNDERESTIMATED ME ONCE,DIDN'T YOU?
; GUESS IT'S A COMMON ENOUGH MISTAKE
AND ONE ; WILL HAPPILY PLAY TO MY ADVANTAGE
..THOUGH ; DIDN'T EXPECT MY FORESIGHT TO PAY OFF SO SOON, OR SO HANDSOMELY.
HELLO?
YES. THANK YOU FOR RETURNING MY CALL, MR WILCOX..

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I CALL IT HYPNOS.'
I'VE FINALLY RID MYSELF OF PICKMAN'S INFLUENCE, DON'T YOU THINK?
I'M AFRAID I'M UNFAMILIAR WITH YOUR WORK, MR. WILCOX.
SADLY, YOU'RE NOT ALONE IN THAT RESPECT
AND HENRY, PLEASE. ANY FRIEND OF HOWARD'S AND ALL THAT
--AND WOULD YOU BELIEVE, NOT FIVE MINUTES AFTER WE SPOKE, HE RANG UP AND INVITED ME TO MEET HIM FOR DINNER. HE WAS RATHER SURPRISED THAT ANYONE WAS LOOKING FOR HIM--
---AND WOULD BE DELIGHTED IF YOU WOULD JOIN US.
WELL... YES, I BELIEVE I SHALL.
WONDERFUL. I TOOK THE LIBERTY OF CALLING A CAB.
I'M SURE WE CAN PUT EVERYTHING TO RIGHTS. HOWARD HAS A WAY----
WELL, OF COURSE, NO NEED TELLING YOU.
YOU'VE LIKELY KNOWN HIM FAR LONGER THAN I. WE'VE ONLY RECENTLY GOTTEN ACQUAINTED---
ACTUALLY, I'VE NEVER SET EYES ON HIM.
REALLY? HOW..HOW...HM.. INTERESTING...
WELL. THEN ALL I CAN SAY IS YOU'RE IN FOR A REAL TREAT
WELCOME
TWO?
WE'RE MEETING SOMEONE.
I SEE HIM. THERE. HOWARD!

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ENJOY YOUR MEAL.
MISS MERCY, IT IS SUCH A PLEASURE TO MEET YOU.
OH, THE PLEASURE IS ALL MINE.
YOUNG HENRY HERE TELLS ME THAT I HAVE BEEN THE CAUSE OF SOME DISTRESS TO YOU.
I HOPE YOU WILL ACCEPT MY MOST PROFOUND APOLOGIES.
I'LL CERTAINLY TAKE THEM UNDER SERIOUS CONSIDERATION.
AH, EXCELLENT. A FIGHTING SPIRIT, A 'PISTOL' IN THE VERNACULAR. I LOOK FORWARD TO—
IF YOU DON'T MIND, I'D LIKE TO SKIP THE SMALL TALK AND DISCUSS GETTING THE PLATES BACK
YES, WELL, I CONFESS I'M NOT EXACTLY CLEAR AS TO YOUR REFERENCE OR YOUR INFERENCE, BUT I SHALL ENDEAVOR TO PROVIDE WHATEVER INFORMATION I MAY HAVE.
BUT MIGHT WE ORDER FIRST? I NEVER CONVERSE WELL ON AN EMPTY STOMACH
THE BOUILLABAISSE HERE IS EXCELLENT, AS ARE THE FRESH SELECTIONS.
I'LL TRUST YOUR JUDGEMENT ON SUPPER.
SPLENDID. AND AFTER WE'VE DINED TO OUR SATISFACTION—
—WELL, I'M CERTAIN IT'S ALL ONE BIG MISUNDERSTANDING.
—FROM YOUR DESCRIPTION, I BELIEVE MALONE'S STATUE TO BE SUBSTANTIALLY OLDER THAN MINE.
IT'S IMPORTANT THAT WE DETERMINE—
I THINK THIS IS IT
YOU'RE TOO LATE, HOWARD.

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THEY'VE TAKEN YOUNG TOM.
YOU LET ME DOWN, HOWARD
MR MALONE, I'M NOT--
DO YOU KNOW WHERE THEY'VE GONE?
AYE
I'VE TRACKED THEM BEFORE AND KNOW THE WAY
SHOULD WE CALL THE POLICE?
A FAT LOT OF HELP THEY'D BE
WHAT ABOUT MRS. MALONE? IS SHE SAFE?
AYE, LAD..
SAFE AS SHE'LL EVER BE--
--THIS SIDE O' THE GRAVE.
NOW THEY'VE GOT YOUNG TOM.
YOU BROKE YOUR PROMISE, HOWARD
YOU SAID YOU'D WRITE THE STORY.
WE'RE CLOSE TO YOUR APARTMENT
INDEED. THIS IS A LITTLE SURPRISE I'M PREPARING FOR MY AUNT

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THE HOUSE HAS BEEN SHUNNED BY THE NEIGHBORS FOR YEARS, BUT IT PERFECTLY SUITS MY -OUR NEEDS.
IT'S TIME MY AUNT AND I HAD OUR OWN HOME AGAIN.
FICTION BUSINESS PICKING UP?
OH, YES, I'VE HAD QUITE A SUCESSFUL YEAR.
I FAIL TO SEE HOW THIS RELATES TO THE ISSUE OF THE MISSING PLATES.
PATIENCE, DEAR LADY. AS I TOLD YOU, I NEITHER HAVE HAVE THEM NOR KNOW OF THEIR WHEREABOUTS.
BUT I BELIEVE THERE IS A RELEVANT CLUE TO WHAT YOU SEEK IN THE BASEMENT' A MYSTERIOUS WHITE STAIN.
WATCH YOUR STEP UNTIL I CAN TURN THE LIGHT ON.
THERE. BETTER?
FOR AN EMPTY, MOULDY ROOM, I SUPPOSE,SO.
MR. LOVECRAFT, REALLY, I THINK I'VE BEEN MORE THAN ACCOMMODATING--
INDEED YOU HAVE HENRY?
I'VE GOT HER!
NOW THAT WAS A MISTAKE.
HOLD HER YOU IDIOT
EASIER SAID THAN DONE MISTER.
AT LEAST BY TWO LITTLE BOYS PLAYING GANGSTER.
TWO BITS OF ADVICE--
KNOW YOUR ENEMY--

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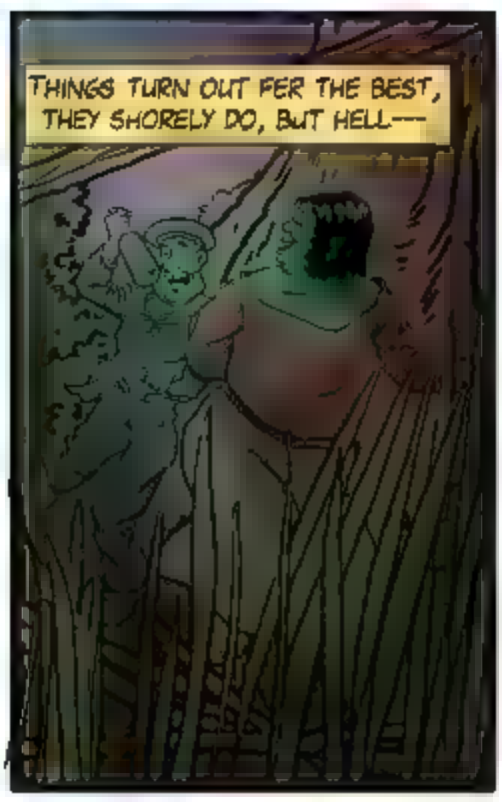
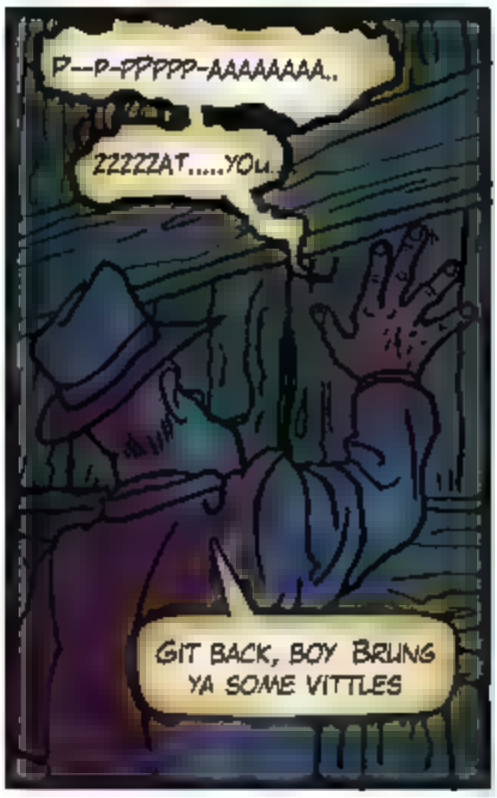
Lovecraft is Missing

4 The Truth or Falsity of Our Beliefs





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The LIVING STAR
by Orwin Battler
I SWAN, THAT BOY!
WHERE ON EARTH DOES HE GET THESE CRAZY IDEAS
SORRY I'M LATE, BUNCH. THAT CRAZY OL' BOWERS BOUGHT THAT SICK PIG AND WANTED 'ER DELIVERED OUT TO HELL 'N' GONE
SUPPER'S IN THE OVEN.
THINK I'LL EAT 'N' HIT THE HAY. I AIN'T SLEPT WORTH A TINKER'S DAM LATELY CRAZY DREAMS ALL NIGHT LONG.
ME TOO. PROB'LY ALLERGIES NEED A GOOD FROST
PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND
CANDLE SHOPPE
AH, GENTS, WELCOME.
LOOKING TO GET YER WICKS DIPPED, ARE YE?
HEY! WHO THE HELL D'YE THINK Y'ARE? YE CAN'T—
(DON'T TOUCH ANYTHING...)
(NO WORRY 'BOUT THAT!)
AND YE SURE AS HELL CAN'T GO DOWN THERE!
OK, 'AT'S IT, I'M CALLING THE COPS

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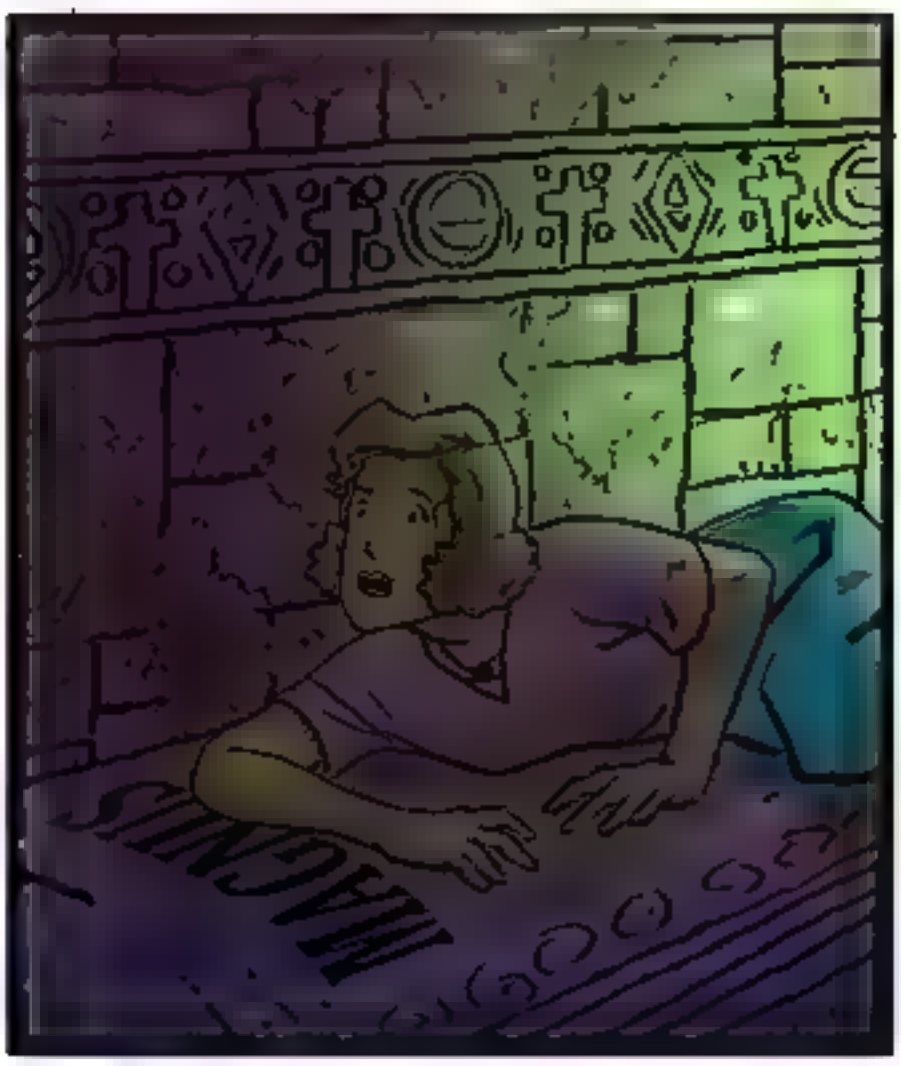

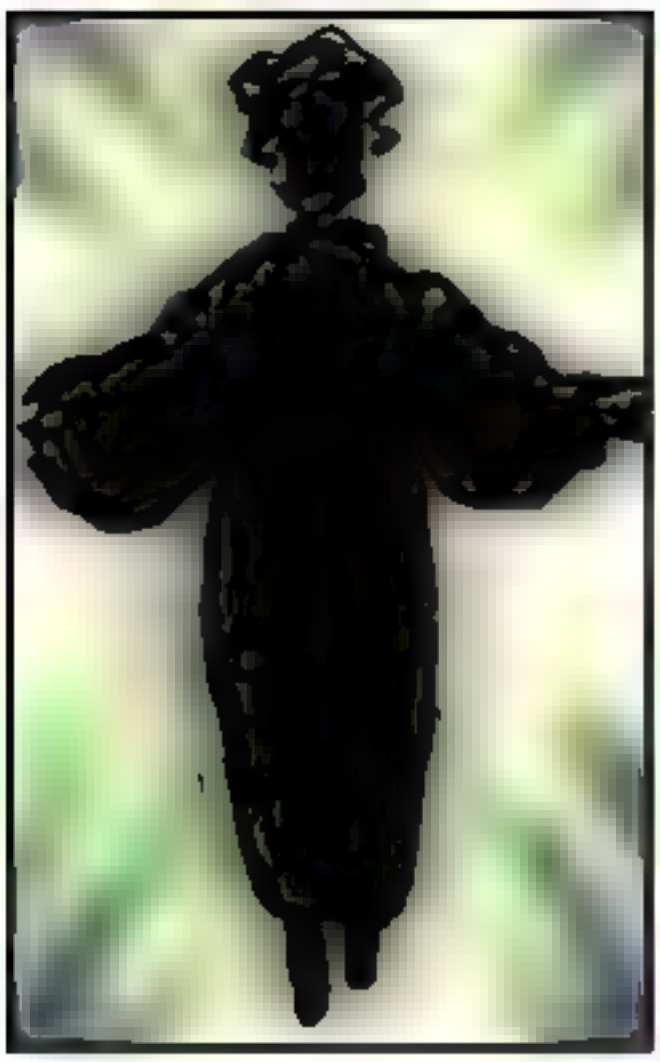

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MUMMY, I'M COLD..

..AND IT STINKS.

BOSTON'S NORTH END, 1908

WE'RE ALMOST THERE, PUMPKIN.

WE'RE GOING TO THE PARTY PLACE. AREN'T YOU EXCITED?

THIS IS YOUR SPECIAL PARTY

RIGHT, DEAR?

I SAID, "RIGHT, DEAR?"

UH--Y--YES. A PARTY JUST FOR...YOU.

HOORAH! THE GUEST OF HONOR.

H'LO, MR. LARCH

DON'T YOU LOOK PRETTY, ALL FRESH AND WHITE

YOU KNOW YOUNG PICKMAN, DON'T YOU?

RICHARD, MEET HIB AND NELDA MERCY AND THEIR LITTLE GIBLET, NANINE

PLEASED, I'M SURE

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GO WITH REBA, LITTLE ONE.
REBA! REBA! REBA!
KEEP HER IN THE YELLOW ROOM UNTIL WE SEND FOR HER.
YASSUM.
CAN WE PLAY 'CRITTERS' LIKE LAST TIME? CAN WE, PLEASE?
HYEH, HYEH, YOU KNOWS WE KIN, CHILE, YOU KNOWS WE KIN.
EVERYONE ELSE HAS ALREADY CHANGED. THE ROBES ARE INSIDE
HOW ABOUT YOU, HIB? ARE YOU EXCITED?
UH, Y-YES...OF COURSE...I AM. IT'S A BIG NIGHT.
HURRY, CHILD. WE HAVEN'T MUCH TIME.
BUT WHAT ABOUT THE PARTY
OH, WE WON'T MISS THE PARTY. IT'S TOO LATE FOR THAT---
--BUT, LORD WILLING AND THE CREEK DON'T RISE, WE CAN SPOIL IT

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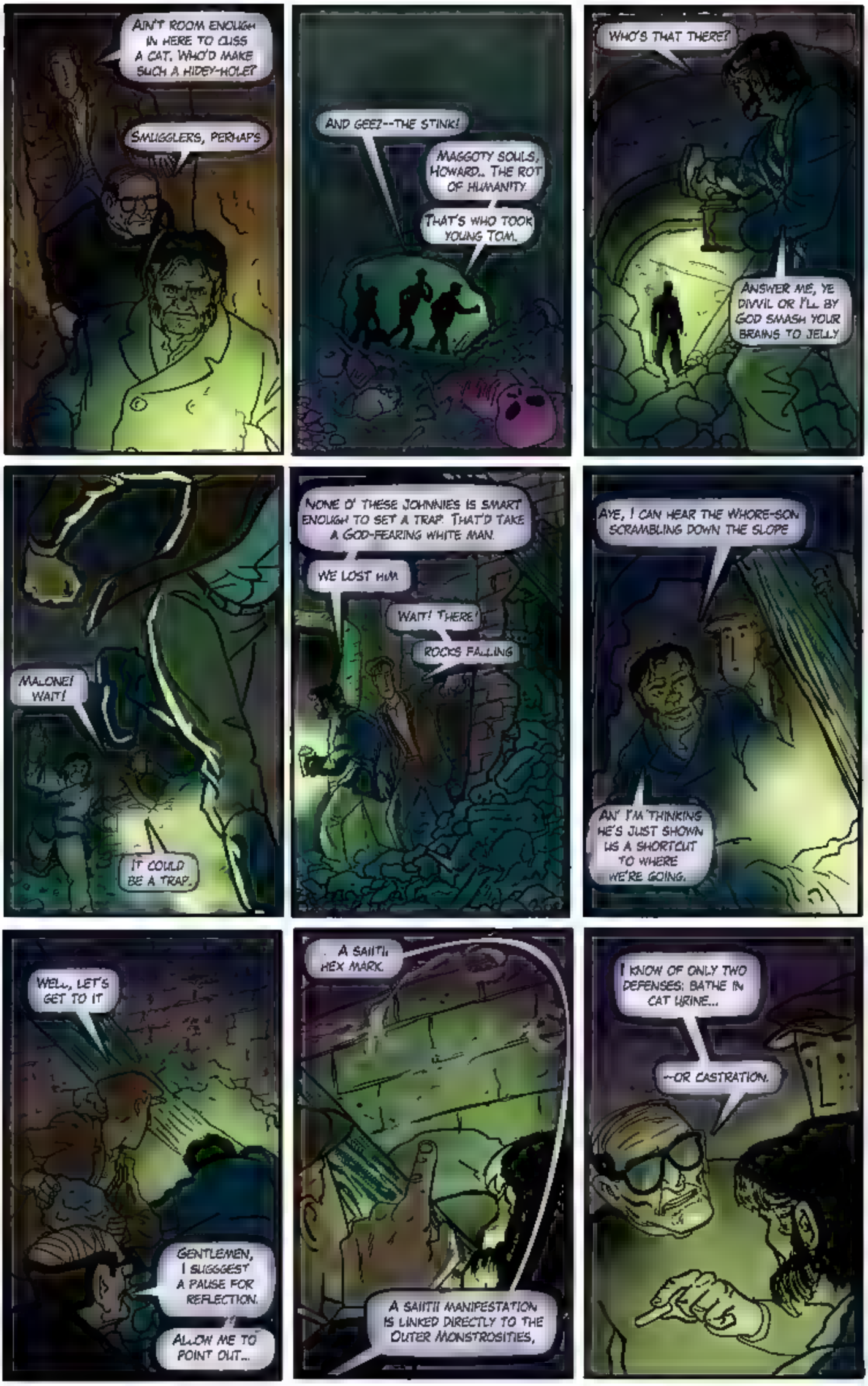
AIN'T ROOM ENOUGH IN HERE TO CUSS A CAT. WHO'D MAKE SUCH A HIDEY-HOLE?
SMUGGLERS, PERHAPS
AND GEEZ--THE STINK!
MAGGOTY SOULS, HOWARD.. THE ROT OF HUMANITY.
THAT'S WHO TOOK YOUNG TOM.
WHO'S THAT THERE?
ANSWER ME, YE DIVVIL OR I'LL BY GOD SMASH YOUR BRAINS TO JELLY
MALONE! WAIT!
IT COULD BE A TRAP.
NONE O' THESE JOHNNIES IS SMART ENOUGH TO SET A TRAP. THAT'D TAKE A GOD-FEARING WHITE MAN.
WE LOST HIM
WAIT! THERE!
ROCKS FALLING
AYE, I CAN HEAR THE WHORE-SON SCRAMBLING DOWN THE SLOPE
AN' I'M THINKING HE'S JUST SHOWN US A SHORTCUT TO WHERE WE'RE GOING.
WELL, LET'S GET TO IT
GENTLEMEN, I SUGGGEST A PAUSE FOR REFLECTION.
ALLOW ME TO POINT OUT...
A SAIITII HEX MARK.
A SAIITII MANIFESTATION IS LINKED DIRECTLY TO THE OUTER MONSTROSITIES,
I KNOW OF ONLY TWO DEFENSES: BATHE IN CAT URINE...
--OR CASTRATION.

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IT'S YOUNG TOM.
YES, WELL, PROBABLY BEST NOT TO DWELL ON THE NEGATIVE.
PRAISE GOD! YOU MADE IT!
IT WAS RIGHT WHERE YOU SAID IT WOULD BE!
BE SURE SHE WEARS IT WHERE IT CAN'T BE SEEN. WE CAN'T AFFORD ANY MORE MISTAKES.
I KNOW.
BELIEVE ME, I KNOW

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IS IT JUST ME OR IS THIS GOPHER HOLE GETTING--
-STEEPER--
HUNNNFFF!
WOWZER.
A TOMB! SMELLS LIKE ONE ANYWAY
HMM. MAN-MADE
PREHISTORIC IN CONSTRUCTION.
CAVE MEN? IN RHODE ISLAND?
LOOKS LIKE SOMEBODY'S SET UP HOUSEKEEPING DOWN HERE. THESE CURTAINS
HOLY CROW!

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(SNIFF) VINEGAR.. THEY'RE IN PICKLE.
BUT WHY
THESE HEATHEN BASTARDS AIN'T THAT DIFFERENT FROM US, HOWARD..
..THEY GOTTA EAT
THE DRUMS.
IT'S TIME.
IT APPEARS THAT--
ALETHEIA MAY BE OLDER THAN I THOUGHT

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YOU SURE IT'S NOT JUST A SUN SIGN?
IT'S POSSIBLE
BUT IT DOESN'T EXPLAIN THAT
OK, I'M FOR GETTING THIS DONE 'N' RIDING FOR THE RANCH.
AGREED. BUT THE SMALL STATUE IS—
HEY!
WHERE I COME FROM A FELLA INTRODUCES HIMSELF --
--BEFORE TRYING TO WHOMP UP ON A STRANGER.
-- JUST OUTTA COMMON COURTESY, JACKASS.
..IS HIM..
SORRY, LADS.
YOU UNDERSTAND, DON'T YOU, HOWARD?
Y'SEE, THEY'VE GOT YOUNG TOM..

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GRAINS OF SAND, EARTHLY REFLECTIONS OF THE ELDRITCH SUNS....
ENVELOP US, ABSORB US...
MELANOTH, YOU NEVER CEASE TO AMAZE ME. HOW DID YOU LOCATE HIM?
ACTUALLY, I DIDN'T
AFTER A DECADE'S SEARCH, I ONLY FOUND THIS PIECE
STILL, IF YOU INTERPRET IT CORRECTLY—
--IT SHOULD GET THE JOB DONE
LEAVE IT TO ME. I'VE STUDIED EVERY ZANN PIECE THAT HAS EVER COME TO LIGHT
THE CADENCE, THE REPETITION EXTRAORDINARY!!
DON'T BE SUCH A NINNY! YEARS OF PLANNING, YEARS OF PRETENSE... IT ALL PAYS OFF TONIGHT!
I KNOW. IT'S JUST THAT. A BASE 5.75 NUMERICAL SYSTEM IS SO NON-SENSICAL.
I'M SURE SOMEONE AT THE ANTHROPOLOGY CONFERENCE LAST MONTH, COULD HAVE
--DOUBLE CHECKED MY TRANSLATIO---
FAITH HIBDON. I HAVE FAITH IN YOUR WORK; YOU MUST HAVE FAITH IN MY JUDGMENT
HE'S AN IDIOT
I TRUST YOU, MASTER
OF COURSE YOU DO MY DEAR, YOU'RE A FANATIC
AND I MEAN THAT IN THE VERY NICEST WAY--
PARDON SIR AN UNUSUAL OUTSIDER REQUESTS ENTRY INTO THE CIRCLE
AH, YES. I'M EXPECTING HIM
--BUT THAT MANUSCRIPT IS EONS OLD WHAT--WHAT IF MY CALCULATIONS ARE---
---WHAT IF THEY ARE WRONG?
THEN YOU WILL HAVE SACRIFICED YOUR DAUGHTER FOR NOTHING.
EXCUSE ME. I HAVE A GUEST WAITING.

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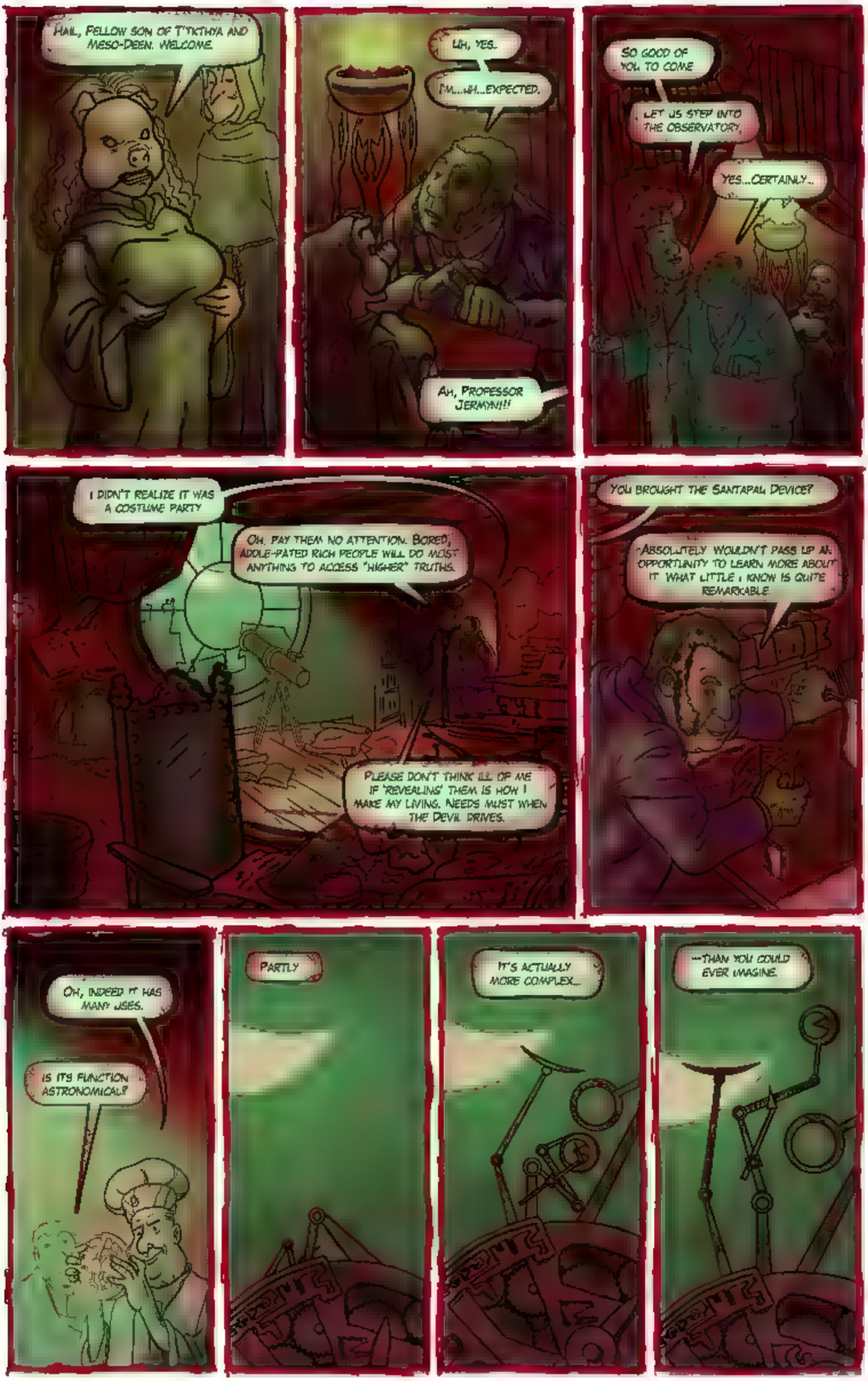
HAIL, FELLOW SON OF T'IKTHYA AND MESO-DEEN. WELCOME.
UH, YES.
I'M...HH...EXPECTED.
AH, PROFESSOR JERMYN!!!
SO GOOD OF YOU TO COME
LET US STEP INTO THE OBSERVATORY.
YES...CERTAINLY...
I DIDN'T REALIZE IT WAS A COSTUME PARTY
OH. PAY THEM NO ATTENTION. BORED, ADOLE-PATED RICH PEOPLE WILL DO MOST ANYTHING TO ACCESS "HIGHER" TRUTHS.
PLEASE DON'T THINK ILL OF ME IF 'REVEALING' THEM IS HOW I MAKE MY LIVING. NEEDS MUST WHEN THE DEVIL DRIVES.
YOU BROUGHT THE SANTAPAU DEVICE?
ABSOLUTELY. WOULDN'T PASS UP AN OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN MORE ABOUT IT. WHAT LITTLE I KNOW IS QUITE REMARKABLE.
OH, INDEED IT HAS MANY USES.
IS ITS FUNCTION ASTRONOMICAL?
PARTLY
IT'S ACTUALLY MORE COMPLEX...
--THAN YOU COULD EVER IMAGINE.

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NOW, WE MUST HURRY.
STARS IN ALIGNMENT, ARE THEY?
OH PISH-POSH! THE STARS ARE ALWAYS IN ALIGNMENT WITH SOMETHING.
DOORS ARE LOCKED SIR.
THANK YOU, EELY.
AND I CAN'T THANK YOU ENOUGH FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE, PROFESSOR.
THE PROPER COORDINATES HAVE ALWAYS BEEN THE MISSING VARIABLE IN THE CALCULATIONS
LOCKED?
BUT THAT AL-
CHANGES—
—NOW
FIRST CEREMONY?
ER, YES.
THE PARTY AFTERWARDS MAKES UP FOR ALL THE REST OF IT
MASK?
IT'S UGLY.
HUSH, NOW. YOU WEAR THAT UNDER YOUR BLOUSE UNTIL I TELL YOU DIFFERENT
LET ME CLOSE THIS UP AND THEN WE CAN PLAY...
CAN'T CATCH ME!
NAH! NO!

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NEVER CONSIDERED HOW A KNIFE MIGHT LOOK TO A PIG BEFORE
HOPE YOU'VE GOT SOMETHING UP YOUR SLEEVE TO GET US OUT OF THIS ONE.
THEY TOOK MY VALISE
IS HIM.
IS HIM.
IS HIM?
IS HIM.
IS WHO, YOU LOP-EARED, COTTON-PICKIN' SIX-SIDED POLYPERAMBULATORY PINHEAD!
UNTIE ME AND LET'S SETTLE THIS LIKE---
IT'S YOUR SCAR.
SCAR?
ON YOUR SHOULDER.
I ONLY GOT A GLANCE AT IT BEFORE MY GLASSES BROKE
FOR CRYING OUT LOUD, WHY? I FELL INTO SOME BOBWIRE WHEN I WAS LITTLE-BITTY
-FHTAGN!!
I SERIOUSLY DOUBT---
H-HOLY C-C-C-C-
DID THE PRIESTESS KILL HERSELF? THEY DO THAT SOMETIMES.
Y-YEAH, B-B-BUT -BUT...

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WHATEVER YOU'VE GOT IN MIND, POTATO HEAD, YOU BETTER MAKE A PROPER JOB OF IT..
~CUZ ELSE I'M GONNA STACK YOU LIKE A CORD OF WOOD.
HMMMPH!
YOUNG PEOPLE TODAY...
NO RESPECT FOR THEIR ELDERS.

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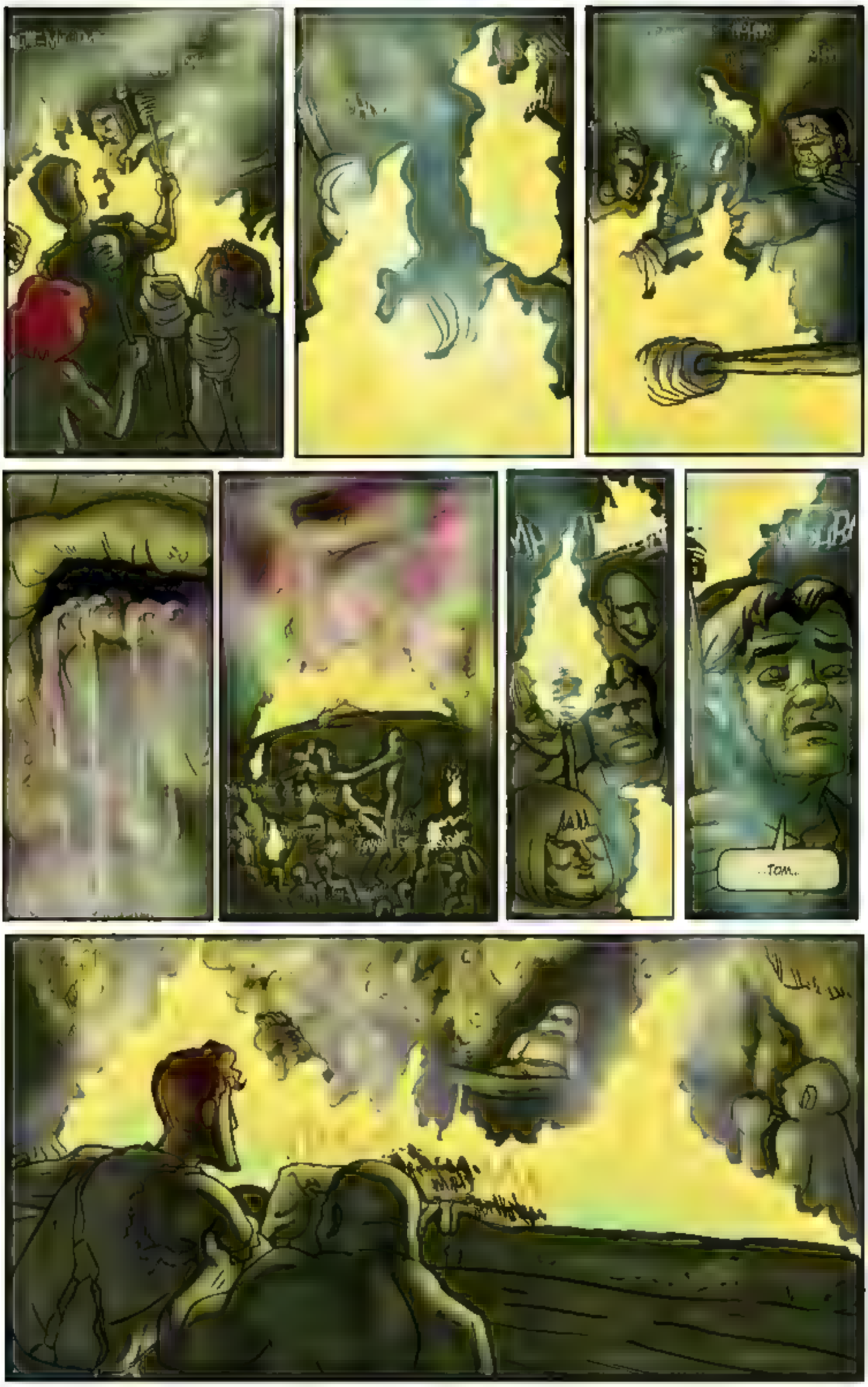

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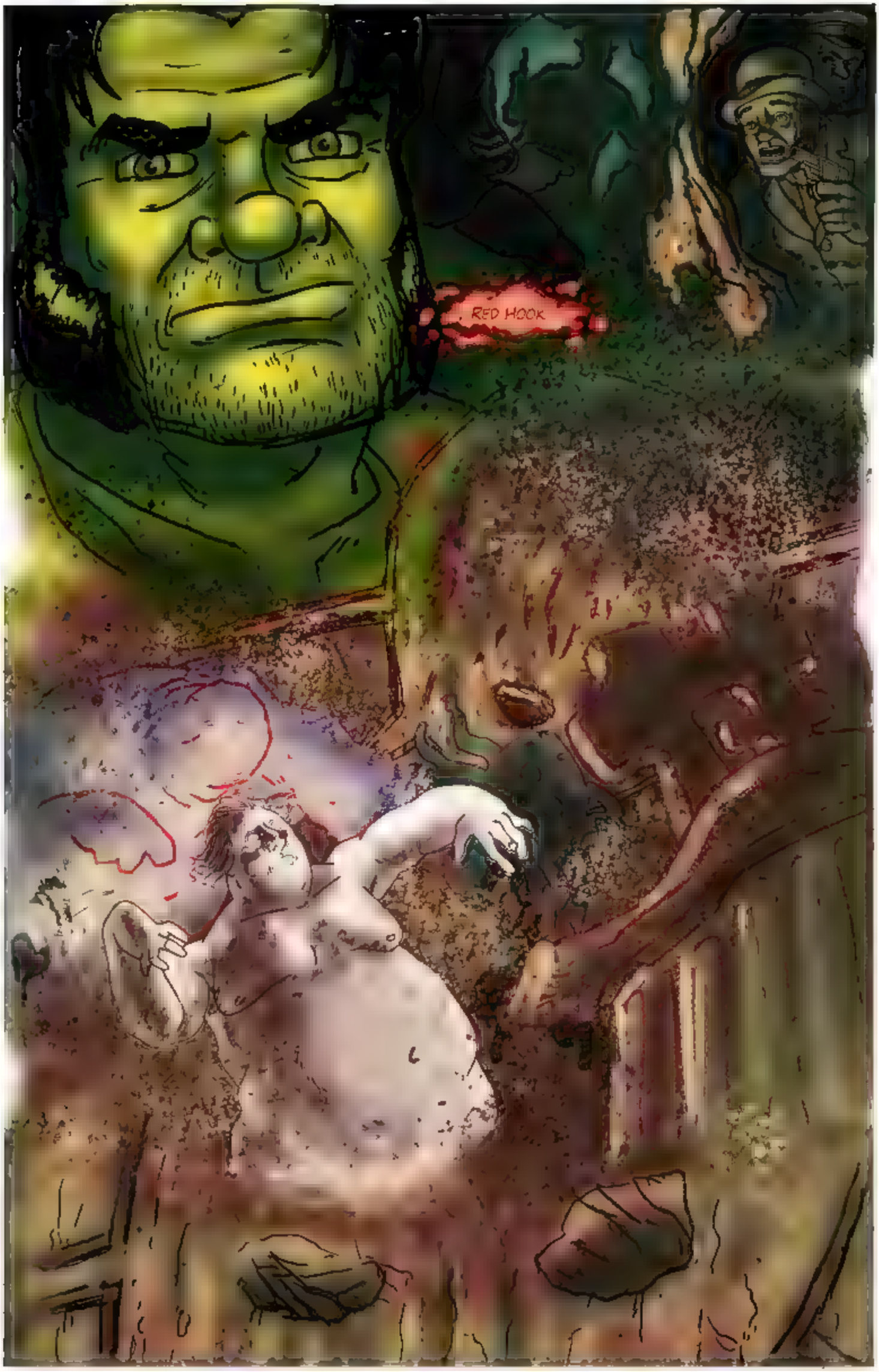

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ENOUGH!
THAT'S MY SON, YA HEATHEN BASTARDS!
I HELPED BRING HIM INTO THIS WORLD--
--BUT I'LL BE THRICE-DAMNED IF I'LL LET THE LIKES O' YE --
--HELP THE GOD-FERSAKEN LITTLE BASTARD STAY IN IT!!

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WEIRDEST SCREAMS I EVER HEARD
UNFORTUNATELY, IT'S NOT SCREAMING.
IT'S CHANTING
REMEMBER: RHYTHM. REPETITION, CADENCE.
BUT THE WORM THINGS ARE GONE.
HEAVENS, YOUNG MAN..
..THERE ARE FAR WORSE DANGERS THAN "WORM-THINGS."
FAR, FAR WORSE...

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DADDEEEEEEEE!!!!
DON'T FRET, PUMPKIN. MADNESS CURES ALL ILLS.
NOW SEE HERE! THIS HAS GONE FAR ENOUGH!
DADDEEEEEEEE!!!!
NO! NOT YET! YOU COULD RUIN EVERYTHING!
YES!
AHHHHH...
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NOW!
I MUST SAVE THE SANTA--
YOUR DEVICE. I KNOW. I'LL GET IT! YOU GET THE GIRL!
NO!NO!NO!NONONONO-- NOT AFTER ALL I'VE DONE!
HUH?
THROUGH THE DOOR, STAY TO THE LEFT!
I'VE GOT IT!
NEVER CARED FOR OPTIMISTS.

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THE INCANTATION! I DIDN'T FINISH THE INCANTATION--!--
FAITH, REBA! WE'VE DONE WHAT WE COULD
TAKE HER-- (COUGH.COUGH)
THANK YOU. SWEET ...JESUS THANK YOU JESUS PRAISE BE!
ARTHUR--
ARTHUR, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT? DID ANYTHING MAKE IT THROUGH?
NO (COUGH) --THE PENDANT-- I THINK--S-STOPPED---- PICKMAN WENT AFTER (COUGH)
RICHARD!
RICHARD! WAIT! WHAT ARE YOU--?

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WE HAVE...REACHED ...THE OUTER LIMITS--
--OF BOTH MY KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE.
MUST BE OUR LUCKY DAY. UP THE CREEK, NO PADDLE--
AND GUESTS FOR DINNER.
SO HOW MANY OF 'EM DO YOU THINK WE CAN TAKE DOWN?
I'M NOT MUCH FOR JUST GIVING UP
HEAVENS, WHO SAID ANYTHING ABOUT GIVING UP? THIS IS A LEARNING OPPORTUNITY, THOUGH ADMITTEDLY MORE STRESSFUL THAN MOST I HAVE ONE IDEA...
---WHICH, AT THE MOMENT, CONSISTS OF YOUR GETTING CLOSE ENOUGH TO YOUNG TOM AND OPENING THIS BOTTLE--
--WHILE I HOLD OFF THE OTHERS.
HOLD 'EM OFF? YOU AND WHAT ARMY?
AS A CHARACTER IN ONE OF YOUR PULP STORIES MIGHT SAY---
---COMPANY A AND COMPANY B.

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So, me wading through a sea of maniacs, latching on to grub-worm and opening an empty bottle might save our bacon....or might not.
I actually had other plans for the bottle, but not knowing exactly what Tom is---
--it's my best
Forget it. I'm so far around the bend this conversation doesn't sound as it should.
If you make it out of here without me, write my Ma 'n' Pa for me. Lie to 'em.
And one more thing...
Shoot the nekked people first. I'm kinda shy.

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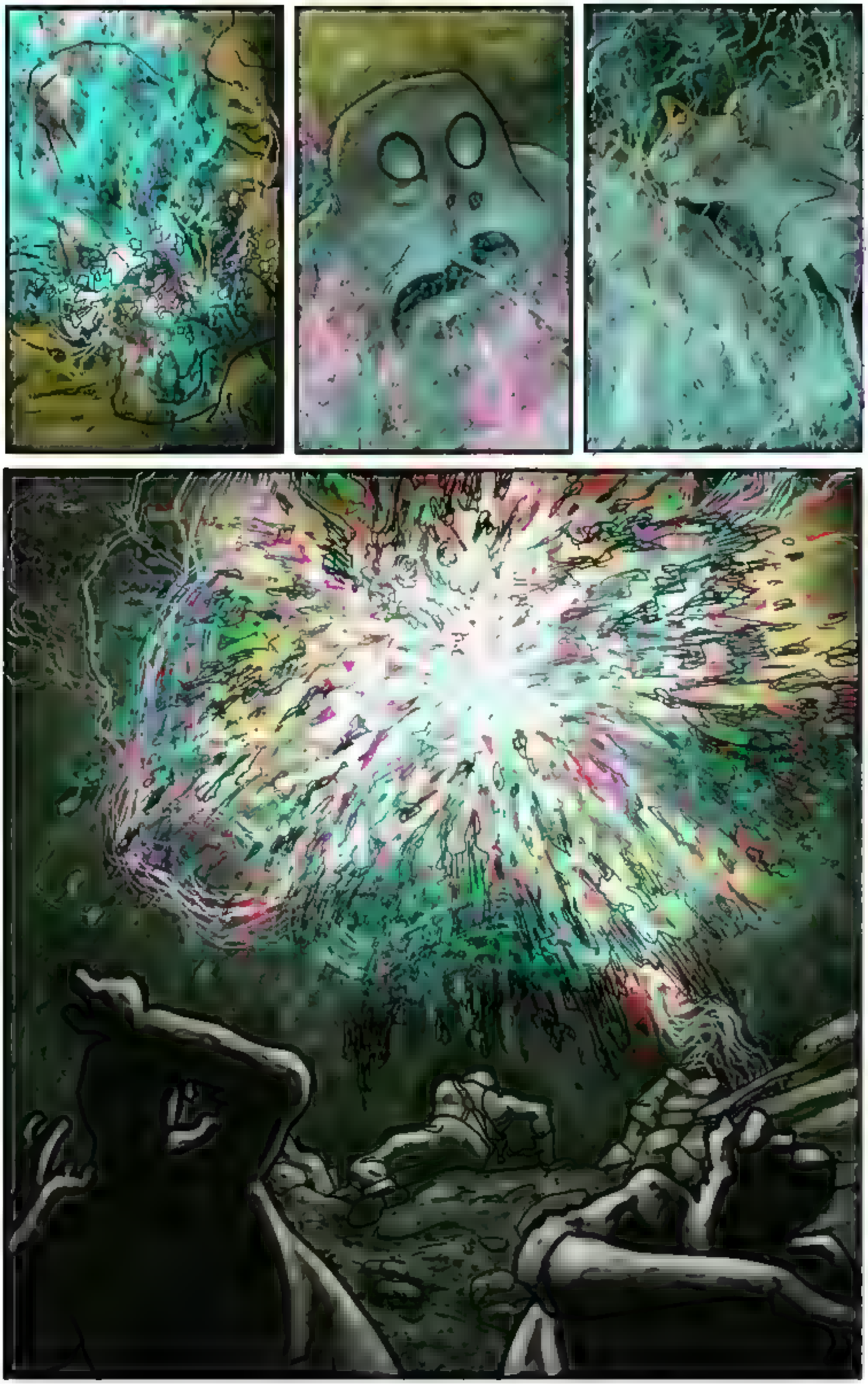

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EFFECTIVE BUT UNFORTUNATE.
ARTHUR WOULD HAVE BEEN OF FAR MORE HELP LATER IN THE GAME.
ARTHUR?
A STORY FOR ANOTHER TIME. RIGHT NOW WE NEED TO KEEP THESE GOOD PEOPLE FROM FINDING OUT--
--I HAVE ONLY ONE BULLET LEFT.
NO GOOD'S GONNA COME FROM SAVING IT. PICK ONE AND GIVE 'EM AN EARLY CHRISTMAS--
THEN I GUESS WE FIGHT FROM CAN TO CAIN'T AND THAT'S ALL SHE WROTE.
EXCEPT FOR THE FACT...
--THAT THERE'S MORE AT STAKE THAN JUST THE TWO OF US.
IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT WE SURVIVE.
I'M OPEN TO SUGGESTIONS.

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GAAKK!!!..SHOOT LEMME HANDL---GFFFF..
HMM. HEADS THEY WIN, TAILS WE LOSE.
DECISIONS, DECISIONS.
I'VE ALWAYS BEEN TERRIBLE AT GAMBLING..
AAAAARRRGGHHH!!!!!
THE TRANSMISSION! THE ETHERIC ENERGY--WHAT DO WE---!?!?
DAMP THE FLOW!! APURATE!!
HEAT! TOO MUCH..HEAT STOP IT! LET ME GO..

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GALVEZ, CUT 'EM OFF. DON'T WAIT ON ME--
FRIENDS OF YOURS?
IF THEY WEREN'T, THEY ARE NOW.
SO, FISH-HEAD, STILL HANGING ON? SOLDIERS IN THE WAR SURVIVED WORSE, DIDN'T THEY?
I MIGHT COULD GET YOU TO A HOSPITAL, I JUST MIGHT BUT, I'SEE MY FATHER..
HE WAS AN INSISTENT CUSS. HE DRILLED IT INTO ME THAT NITS MAKE LICE--
--BUT LICE MAKE NITS.

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THAT'LL BE ENOUGH, YE CRAWDAD-EATER. THIS BE MY JURISDICTION AN' WE AIN'T A-KILLING ANYONE WHO DON'T NEED IT
Y'MIGHT NOT BE SO GOOD A JUDGE OF THAT AS YOU THINK, CAPTAIN. BUT IT IS YOUR JURISDICTION.
STILL, IF YOU'RE PARTIAL TO THIS HAND, DON'T LAY IT ON ME AGAIN.
I WONT KID YOU, SON, THIS IS NASTY. WE SHOULD GET YOU TO THE HOSPITAL. MUST HURT LIKE BLAZES.
ACTUALLY, IT DOESN'T LET A DOG LICK IT AND I'LL BE FINE.
INSPECTOR LEGRASSE! AN UNEXPECTED BUT PLEASANT SURPRISE TO FIND YOU HERE.
SURPRISE? IT WAS YOU AS SENT FOR ME, WARN'T IT??
I DID?
WHO ELSE WOULD'VE? ME AND GALVEZ FOUND THE OLD MAN AND WENT BACK TO THE APARTMENT ON BARNES LIKE YOU SAID.
I TOOK A STROLL DOWN TO THE PRECINCT TO CHECK IN---
--JUST IN TIME TO MEET THIS SNOTRAG HOYDEN --NOT THE KIND OF PEOPLE I'D EXPECT YOU TO BE CONSORTING WITH, MIND YOU--
SHE WAS RAISING HOLY HELL ABOUT TWO MEN AND A PRIEST--
THEN SHE SHOVES THIS IN MY HAND AND SAYS "HURRY"
A MAP?
YES, AND SPOT ON.
THERE'S NO NAME ON IT FAR BE IT FROM ME TO COMPLAIN, BUT WHAT MADE YOU THINK IT WAS FROM ME?
GIVE IT A TURN, YOU'LL SEE.
HEAVENS.

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HEY, THAT LOOKS LIKE HOWARD! I THOUGHT YOU DIDN'T KNOW HIM.
I DON'T!
NOR HAVE I EVER BEEN TO GIZA.
Y'KNOW, THAT'S NOT THE ONLY THING IN ALL THIS BUSINESS THAT AIN'T ADDING UP
LIKE THIS SCAR ON MY BACK. WHAT THE HECK?
I BARELY EVER BEEN OUT OF TOUGH LUCK BEFORE. WHO WOULD KNOW ABOUT IT?
MA SAID I FELL IN SOME BOB-WIRE WHEN I WAS A BABY
I NEVER PAID IT MUCH MIND.
OUR ONLY HOPE OF ANSWERING THOSE QUESTIONS LIES IN FINDING MR. LOVECRAFT.
INSPECTOR, WE NEED REST AND SUSTENANCE. WE'LL MEET YOU AND YOUR CHARGE TOMORROW MORNING AT THE BARNES STREET APARTMENT
AND I MUST GET A TEAM DOWN HERE TO MAP AND PHOTOGRAPH THESE MAGNIFICENT RUINS.
LIKE THERE AIN'T ENOUGH TO DO AS IT IS
KNOWLEDGE IS POWER, YOUNG MAN. FOR INSTANCE, IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE YOUR SCAR IS SIMPLY A CHILDHOOD MISHAP.
WHEN IT LOOKS EXACTLY LIKE THAT
POOR DEAR. YOU DIDN'T REMEMBER ANY OF THAT, DID YOU?
...I...I KNEW I HATED YOU...
...I NEVER KNEW WHY.

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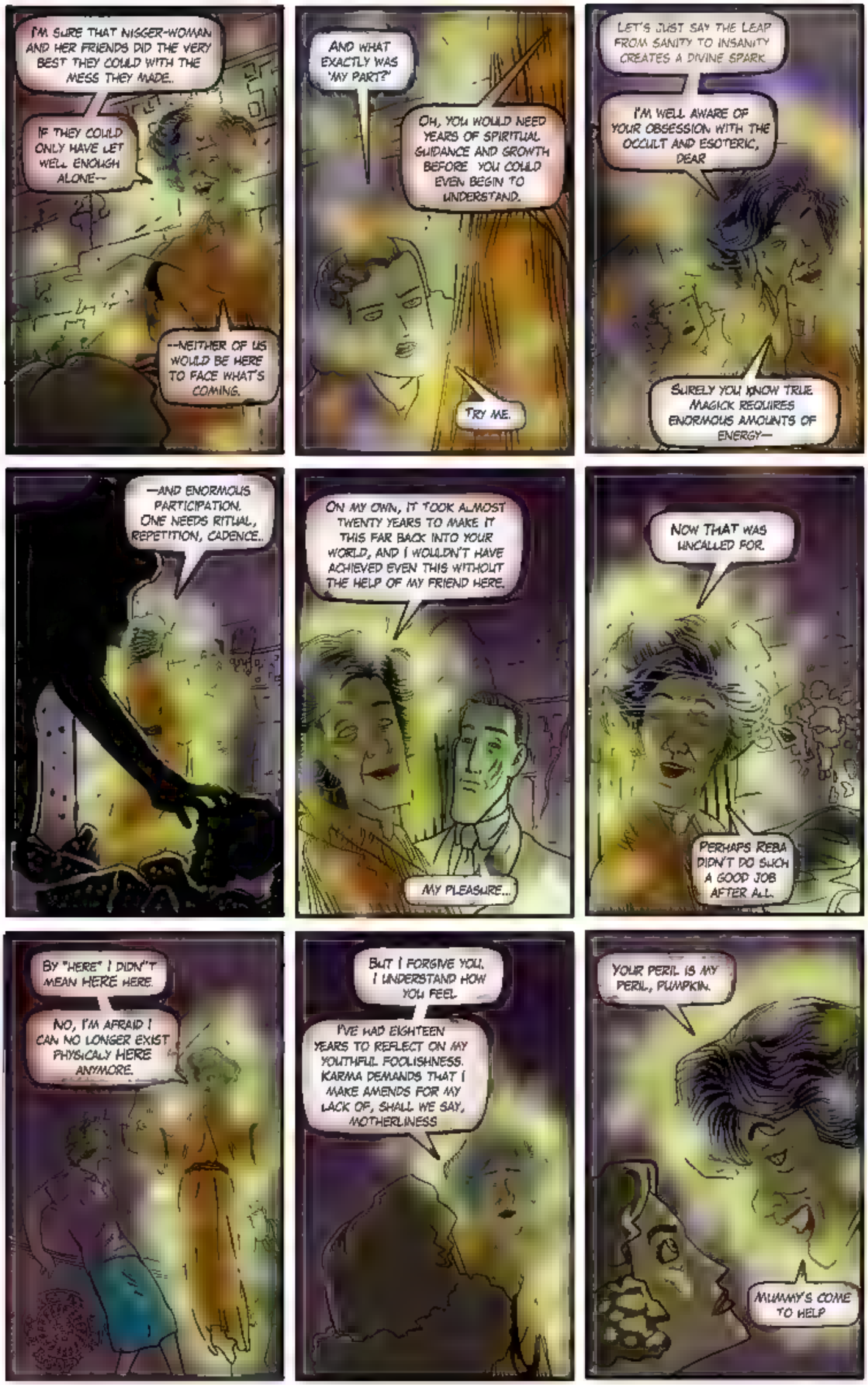
I'M SURE THAT NIGGER-WOMAN AND HER FRIENDS DID THE VERY BEST THEY COULD WITH THE MESS THEY MADE..
IF THEY COULD ONLY HAVE LET WELL ENOUGH ALONE--
--NEITHER OF US WOULD BE HERE TO FACE WHAT'S COMING.
AND WHAT EXACTLY WAS 'MY PART?'
OH, YOU WOULD NEED YEARS OF SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE AND GROWTH BEFORE YOU COULD EVEN BEGIN TO UNDERSTAND.
TRY ME.
LET'S JUST SAY THE LEAP FROM SANITY TO INSANITY CREATES A DIVINE SPARK
I'M WELL AWARE OF YOUR OBSESSION WITH THE OCCULT AND ESOTERIC, DEAR
SURELY YOU KNOW TRUE MAGICK REQUIRES ENORMOUS AMOUNTS OF ENERGY—
—AND ENORMOUS PARTICIPATION. ONE NEEDS RITUAL, REPETITION, CADENCE..
ON MY OWN, IT TOOK ALMOST TWENTY YEARS TO MAKE IT THIS FAR BACK INTO YOUR WORLD, AND I WOULDN'T HAVE ACHIEVED EVEN THIS WITHOUT THE HELP OF MY FRIEND HERE.
MY PLEASURE...
NOW THAT WAS UNCALLED FOR.
PERHAPS REBA DIDN'T DO SUCH A GOOD JOB AFTER ALL.
BY "HERE" I DIDN'T MEAN HERE HERE.
NO, I'M AFRAID I CAN NO LONGER EXIST PHYSICALY HERE ANYMORE.
BUT I FORGIVE YOU. I UNDERSTAND HOW YOU FEEL
I'VE HAD EIGHTEEN YEARS TO REFLECT ON MY YOUTHFUL FOOLISHNESS. KARMA DEMANDS THAT I MAKE AMENDS FOR MY LACK OF, SHALL WE SAY, MOTHERLINESS
YOUR PERIL IS MY PERIL, PUMPKIN.
MUMMY'S COME TO HELP

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YOU MURDERED MY FATHER IN FRONT OF ME, TRIED TO DRIVE ME INSANE AND REMOVED THE MEMORY BLOCKS THAT REBA PUT IN PLACE.
YOU THINK I WANT YOUR HELP?
DON'T GET SNOTTY WITH ME, YOUNG LADY. I AM STILL YOUR MOTHER.
AND YOU DO NEED MY HELP, LIKE IT OR NOT.
LIKE YOU NOW, I THOUGHT WE HAD FAILED IN OUR GREAT WORK THAT LONG AGO NIGHT
BUT WE HAD MERELY BEEN TRICKED
THIS ALL BECAME CLEAR TO ME AS I FELT MY FLESH START TO BLISTER FROM THE HEAT...
THE MAN WHO HAD BROUGHT US ALL TOGETHER, WAS DANCING JOYOUSLY AMIDST THE FLAMES.
BEFORE HIM, ON THE VERY ALTAR ON WHICH YOU SAT, SOMETHING CAME INTO BEING.
WHAT IT WAS, I DON'T KNOW BUT--
--IT WAS CLEAR HE GOT WHAT HE'D WANTED. THE REST OF US WERE JUST A MEANS TO AN END.
BUT HE OWED ME, SURELY. I WAS HIS MOST DEVOTED ACOLYTE.
BUT AS I RAN FORWARD, SOMEONE ELSE INTERVENED, PUSHED ME BACK,...
...INTO...
...HEAVEN...

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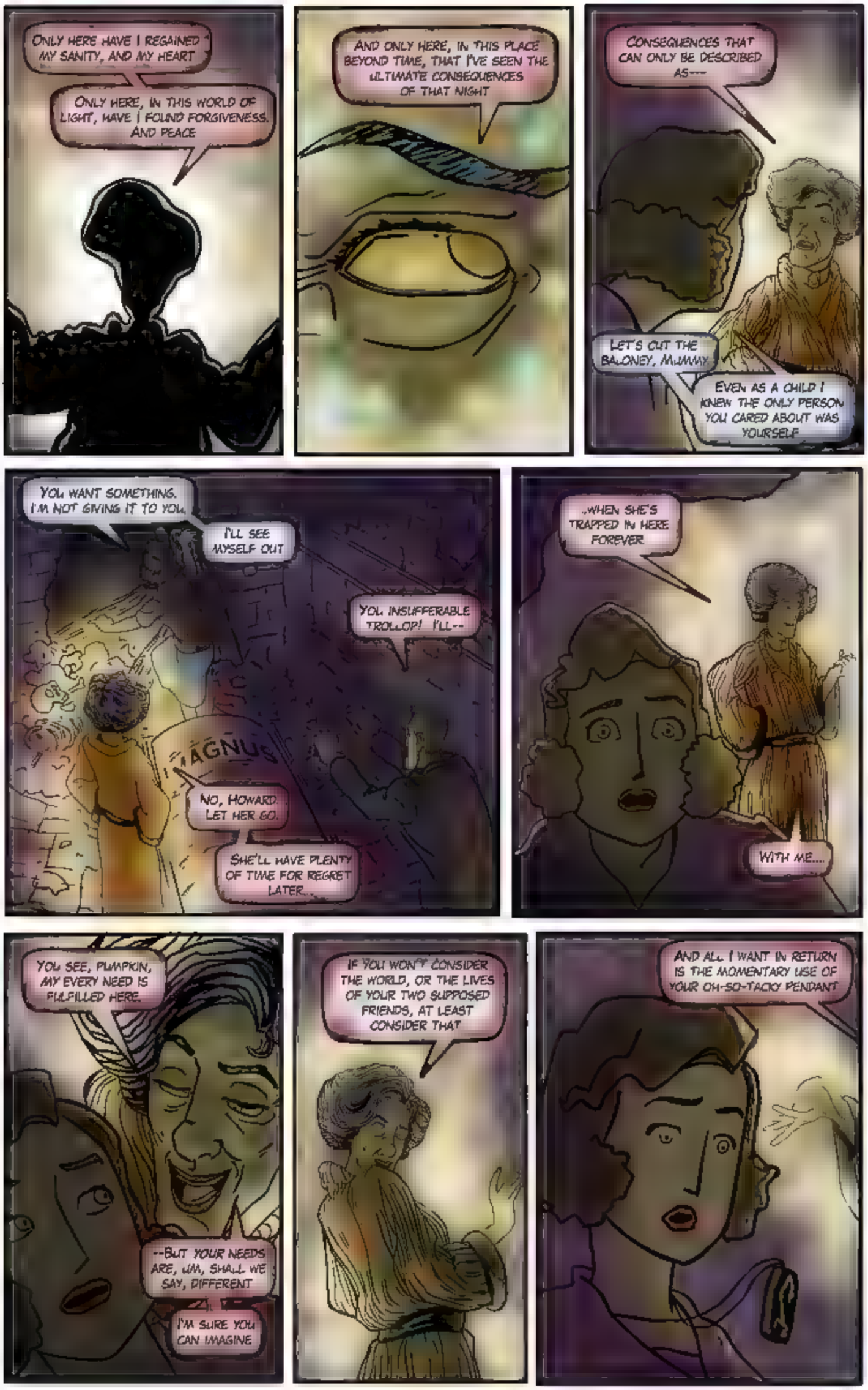
ONLY HERE HAVE I REGAINED MY SANITY, AND MY HEART
ONLY HERE, IN THIS WORLD OF LIGHT, HAVE I FOUND FORGIVENESS. AND PEACE
AND ONLY HERE, IN THIS PLACE BEYOND TIME, THAT I'VE SEEN THE ULTIMATE CONSEQUENCES OF THAT NIGHT
CONSEQUENCES THAT CAN ONLY BE DESCRIBED AS---
LET'S CUT THE BALONEY, MUMMY
EVEN AS A CHILD I KNEW THE ONLY PERSON YOU CARED ABOUT WAS YOURSELF
YOU WANT SOMETHING. I'M NOT GIVING IT TO YOU.
I'LL SEE MYSELF OUT
YOU INSUFFERABLE TROLLOP! I'LL--
AGNUS
NO, HOWARD. LET HER GO.
SHE'LL HAVE PLENTY OF TIME FOR REGRET LATER...
..WHEN SHE'S TRAPPED IN HERE FOREVER
WITH ME....
YOU SEE, PUMPKIN, MY EVERY NEED IS FULFILLED HERE.
--BUT YOUR NEEDS ARE, UM, SHALL WE SAY, DIFFERENT
I'M SURE YOU CAN IMAGINE
IF YOU WON'T CONSIDER THE WORLD, OR THE LIVES OF YOUR TWO SUPPOSED FRIENDS, AT LEAST CONSIDER THAT
AND ALL I WANT IN RETURN IS THE MOMENTARY USE OF YOUR OH-SO-TACKY PENDANT

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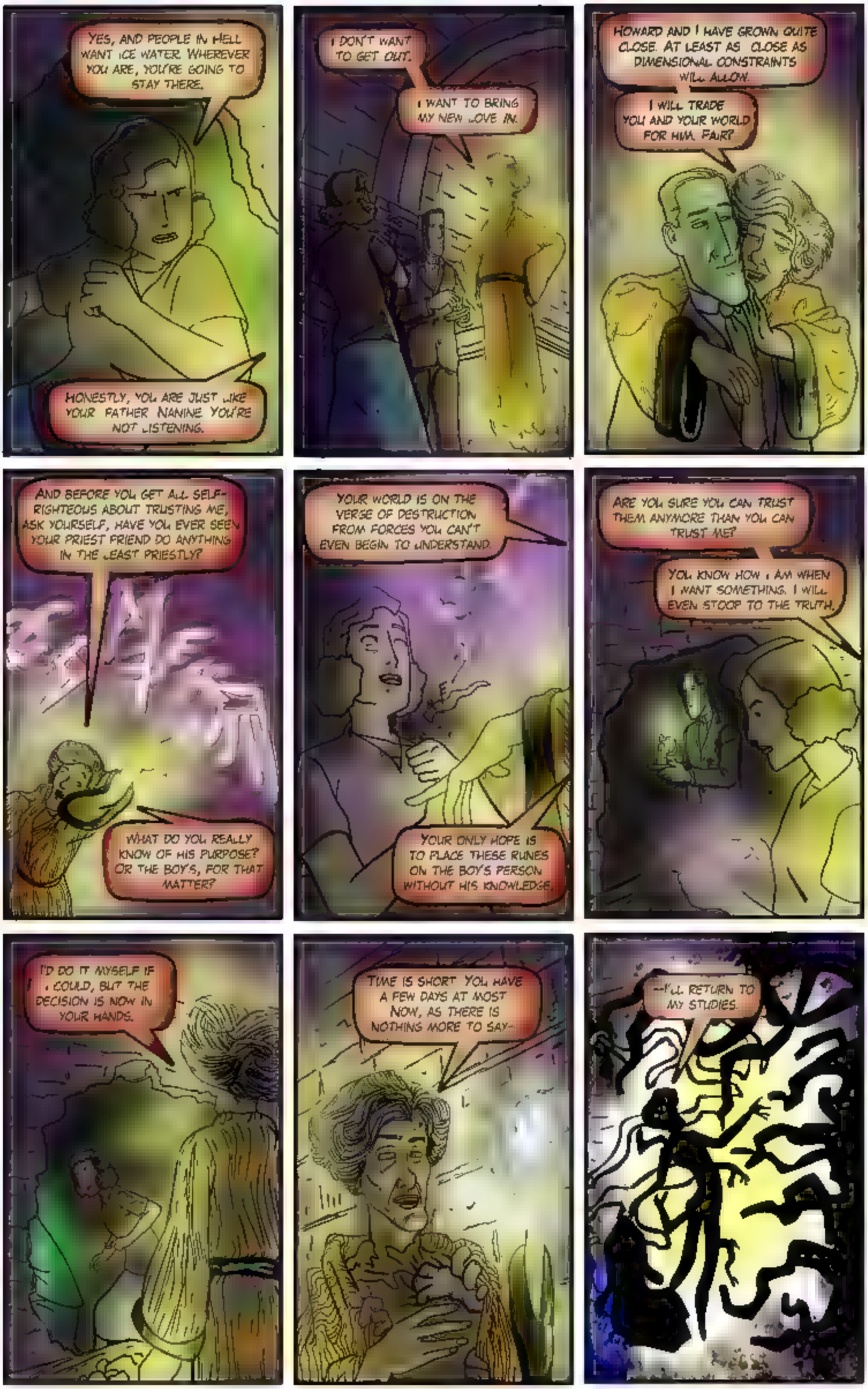
YES, AND PEOPLE IN HELL WANT ICE WATER. WHEREVER YOU ARE, YOU'RE GOING TO STAY THERE.
HONESTLY, YOU ARE JUST LIKE YOUR FATHER NANINE. YOU'RE NOT LISTENING.
I DON'T WANT TO GET OUT.
I WANT TO BRING MY NEW LOVE IN.
HOWARD AND I HAVE GROWN QUITE CLOSE. AT LEAST AS CLOSE AS DIMENSIONAL CONSTRAINTS WILL ALLOW.
I WILL TRADE YOU AND YOUR WORLD FOR HIM. FAIR?
AND BEFORE YOU GET ALL SELF-RIGHTEOUS ABOUT TRUSTING ME, ASK YOURSELF, HAVE YOU EVER SEEN YOUR PRIEST FRIEND DO ANYTHING IN THE LEAST PRIESTLY?
WHAT DO YOU REALLY KNOW OF HIS PURPOSE? OR THE BOY'S, FOR THAT MATTER?
YOUR WORLD IS ON THE VERGE OF DESTRUCTION FROM FORCES YOU CAN'T EVEN BEGIN TO UNDERSTAND.
YOUR ONLY HOPE IS TO PLACE THESE RUNES ON THE BOY'S PERSON WITHOUT HIS KNOWLEDGE.
ARE YOU SURE YOU CAN TRUST THEM ANYMORE THAN YOU CAN TRUST ME?
YOU KNOW HOW I AM WHEN I WANT SOMETHING. I WILL EVEN STOOP TO THE TRUTH.
I'D DO IT MYSELF IF I COULD, BUT THE DECISION IS NOW IN YOUR HANDS.
TIME IS SHORT. YOU HAVE A FEW DAYS AT MOST. NOW, AS THERE IS NOTHING MORE TO SAY--
--I'LL RETURN TO MY STUDIES.

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YOU KNOW, SOME SAY THESE TUNNELS DATE BACK TO THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR
PERSONALLY, I THINK THEY ARE MUCH, MUCH OLDER
THEY ARE FAR TOO EXTENSIVE AND COMPLEX FOR MERE SMUGGLING. AND SOME OF THE SIDE TUNNELS ARE... UNUSUAL IN THEIR APPROACH.
BUT THE FACT REMAINS, NO ONE ELSE REALLY KNOWS ABOUT THEM.
I DON'T THINK MUMMY WOULD APPROVE
I KNOW I DON'T
I THINK "MUMMY" WILL UNDERSTAND WHEN I BRING HER THE PENDANT.
SHE DOESN'T NEED TO KNOW THE REST
IN FACT, I--- YURK!!!
THANK YOU, BUT YOU CAN STAY WHERE YOU ARE JUST THE SAME.
TAKE A LOOK.
WHA--?? THIS ISN'T LOVECRAFT!!
IT'S THE MAN WHO WAS FOLLOWING ME IN PROVIDENCE!
EXCELLENT. NOW WE'VE SETTLED THAT, MISS MERCY---
---I UNDERSTAND YOU DON'T CARE FOR MY PAINTINGS....

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COUNT!

OOOF!

I—I DON'T UNDERS—

UNWRITTEN COMPOSITION IN HIS HEAD THAT DEFLECTS MY POWERS!

YOU THINK THAT'S FUNNY YOU JEW BASTARD?

WE'LL BE RID OF YOUR KIND SOON ENOUGH.

I SHOULD NEVER HAVE LET YOU TALK ME INTO IT, MUÑOZ. IT WAS A STUPID IDEA.

INITIATIVE IS ONE THING. WASTING RESOURCES AND HAVING NOTHING TO SHOW FOR IT IS QUITE ANOTHER

WE DON'T EVEN REALLY KNOW THE BOY'S IMPORTANCE, OTHER THAN ST GERMAIN IS INTERESTED IN HIM.

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WE'RE PLAYING A VERY DANGEROUS GAME HERE. THAT RITUAL WAS TO SUPPLY ALL THE ETHERIC ENERGY FOR OUR LITTLE SIDE BET
I DON'T WANT TO BE THE ONE EXPLAINING HOW WE LOST IT
MRRFFFF
I HAVE BROUGHT US THIS FAR, YES?
OF COURSE, I DIDN'T----
THE MACHINES THE PLANS THESE ARE ALL MY CREATIONS, ALSO YES?
CERTAINLY BUT I HAVE JUST AS MUCH AT STAKE AS YOU. DO
IDIOTA! YOU HAVE NO IDEA, THE STAKES FOR WHICH I AM PLAYING.
YOU DO NOT THINK I WOULD HAVE THE BACK-UP PLAN?
NEITHER OUR COUNT OR YOUR PATRON OFFER THE ULTIMATE PRIZE.
THAT I INTEND TO SEIZE FOR MY--
GENTLEMEN, WE HAVE A PROBLEM.
WAIT! FIRST WE MUST RID OURSELVES OF THE VERMIN.
HE'S AN IMBECILE HE CAN DO US NO HARM.
I HATE IMBECILES!
APPARENTLY THAT MEDDLESOME PRIEST HAS BEEN MORE THOROUGH THAN I THOUGHT
WORSE, I'VE HEARD NO NEWS ABOUT THE BOY
SURELY YOU ARE NOT GOING TO DISAPPOINT ME, DOCTOR.

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You have placed the great responsibility in my hands, yes? On my family's honor, I will not fail you.
Come. See. Even as we speak, the old secrets of the world give themselves up to science..
The power that has lain dormant for eons now flows freely.
Gathered and stored for the great work we have set for ourselves.
From those shadows in which your disciples worship, yes?
From the dimly lit corners of forgotten villages. .
From the lost and the hopeless to whom you promise deliverance..
Ready and waiting for your command
That's not really an answer, is it , Doctor?
I'm counting on you, but I learned long ago to never put all my eggs in one basket. .
No one variable can deter me, but...let us just say half a measure is worse than none in this case.
Your family honor will be the least of your worries if you fail.
Now send me two of your healthiest assistants. I must find the boy.. ..and get this damned music out of my head .

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I'M SO GLAD YOU COULD USE THE COAT AND SHIRT HOWARD WOULD NEVER WEAR HAND ME DOWNS FROM NEIGHBORS.

HE CAN BE SO STUFFY AT TIMES.

BEGGARS CAN'T BE CHOOSERS. I DIDN'T BUDGET FOR BUYING A NEW WARDROBE.

THANKS MUCH.

I'M SORRY WE DON'T KNOW ANYMORE ABOUT HOWARD'S DISAPPEARANCE THAN WHEN WE STARTED.

IT'S NOT FROM LACK OF TRYING.

HRMMMMM.

OH, I'M SURE. I APPRECIATE YOUR PUTTING YOURSELF OUT SO, MR. BATTLER.

I HONESTLY DON'T KNOW IF I SHOULD BE ALARMED OR NOT HOWARD HAS ALWAYS BEEN SUCH AN ODD BOY--

ODD ENOUGH TO DISAPPEAR FROM AN ESSENTIALLY LOCKED ROOM, MIZ GAMWELL?

WELL, NO. HE IS USUALLY QUITE POLITE.

AND YOU SAY HE HAS NO RELIGOUS OR SPIRITUAL AFFILIATIONS.

OH, ABSOLUTELY NOT WE DID TRY TO RAISE HIM RIGHT--

--BUT HIS GRANDFATHER FILLED HIS HEAD WITH ALL THAT ARABIAN NIGHTS RUBBISH, GREEK AND ROMAN MYTHS, AND SO ON. I'M JUST THANKFUL HOWARD ISN'T A DEVIL WORSHIPPER.

IS THIS HIS HANDWRITING?

YES, NOTES TO HIMSELF.

THERE'S NOTHING TO SAY WHERE HE'S GOTTEN OFF TO.

MAYBE, MAYBE NOT

WHAT DO YOU MAKE OF THIS?

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YOU'VE MENTIONED SOME OF THESE PEOPLE. MALONE'S GOT TO BE TOM, DON'T YOU —
...CHARACTERS!
HUH?
THEY ARE PEOPLE BUT THEY ARE ALSO THE NAMES OF CHARACTERS IN LOVECRAFT'S STORIES.
BUNNY MADE A CROSS-REFERENCED LIST. I HAVE IT HERE SOMEWHERE
BUNNY?
YES, HERE IT IS...
ROBERT DELAPORE, RATS IN THE WALLS,
PUBLISHED IN THE MARCH, 1924 ISSUE OF WEIRD TALES.
SO? ARE YOU SAYING DELAPORE IS A REAL GUY, TOO?
PERHAPS. THAT SEEMS TO BE THE PATTERN. JERMYN, WARREN, MALONE...
HERE: HERBERT WEST: RE-ANIMATOR, PUBLISHED IN HOME BREW, 1922.
NEVER HEARD OF THAT ONE.
MALONE..SUBMITTED PICKMAN....SAME... WILCOX...
NO TILLINGHAST...
I THINK I HEAR 'EM DOWN HERE--
HERE WE GO.
INSPECTOR LEGRASSE.
COME IN. YOU KNOW MR BATTLER. MAY I PRESENT MRS. GAMWELL...
PLEASED.
HERE'S THE OLD FELLA. QUITE A HANDFUL ONCE WE GOT THE CHAINS OFF'N HIM.
THREW A REGULAR FIT UNTIL WE DUG UP THE FLOOR OF THE BOOKSTORE
I NEEDED MY PAPERS.
YOU UNDERSTAND, DON'T YOU, MUNSFORD? I NEEDED MY PAPERS, DIDN'T I?
IT REALLY IS YOU, ISN'T IT, MUNSFORD?

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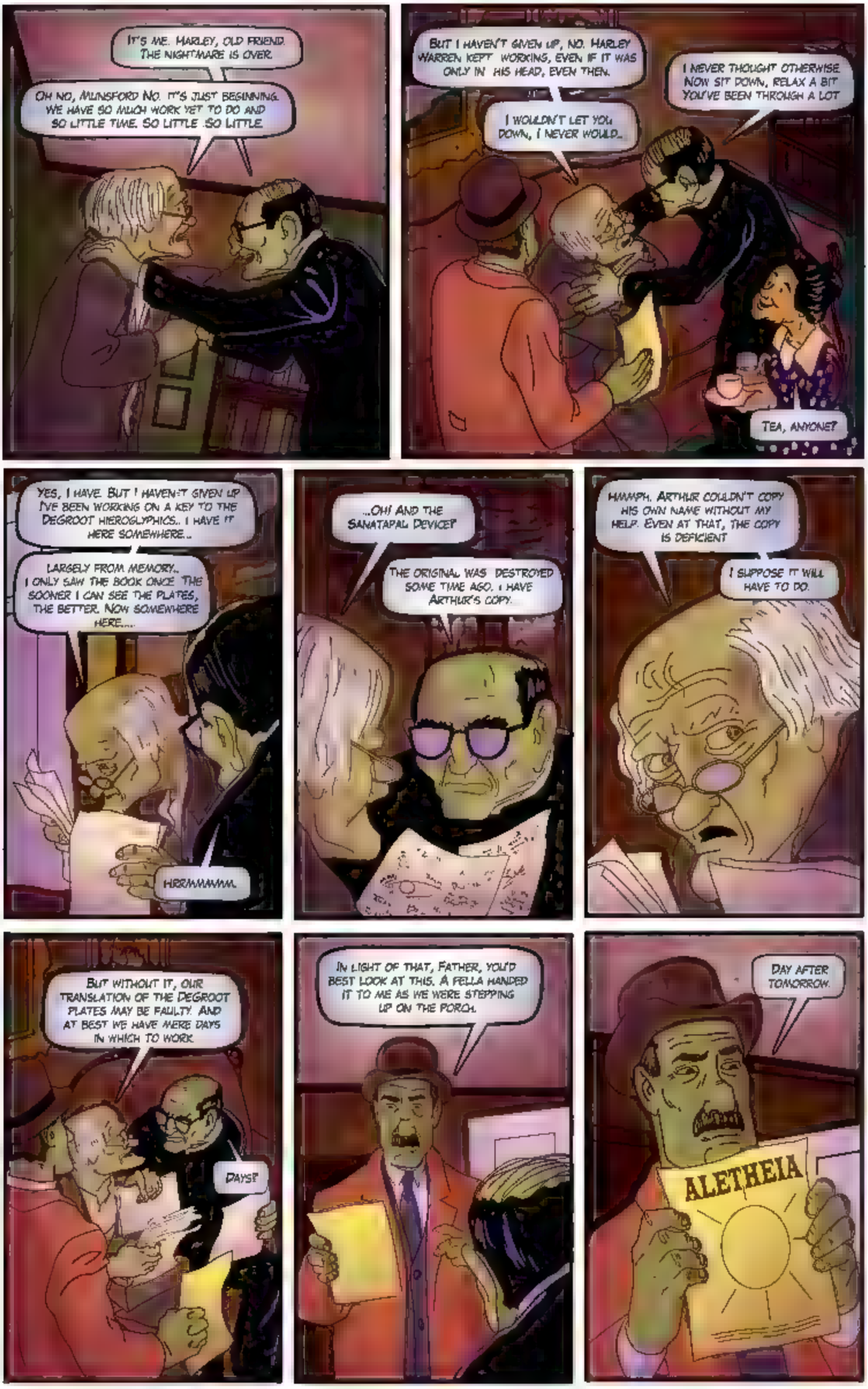
It's me. Harley, old friend. The nightmare is over.
Oh no, Munsford No. It's just beginning. We have so much work yet to do and so little time. So little. So little.
But I haven't given up, no. Harley Warren kept working, even if it was only in his head, even then.
I wouldn't let you down, I never would..
I never thought otherwise. Now sit down, relax a bit you've been through a lot
Tea, anyone?
Yes, I have. But I haven't given up I've been working on a key to the DeGroot hieroglyphics.. I have it here somewhere..
Largely from memory.. I only saw the book once. The sooner I can see the plates, the better. Now somewhere here....
Hrrmmmmm.
...Oh! And the Sanatapal Device!
The original was destroyed some time ago. I have Arthur's copy.
Hmmph. Arthur couldn't copy his own name without my help. Even at that, the copy is deficient
I suppose it will have to do.
But without it, our translation of the DeGroot plates may be faulty. And at best we have mere days in which to work.
Days!
In light of that, Father, you'd best look at this. A fella handed it to me as we were stepping up on the porch.
Day after tomorrow.
ALETHEIA

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THE ADDRESS IS A PRIVATE RESIDENCE, INITIATES ONLY, I'D IMAGINE.
YOU THINK HOWARD'S A MEMBER?!
IT DOES SEEM UNLIKELY, DOESN'T IT?
BUT THEY WOULDN'T BE DELIVERING THESE DOOR TO DOOR.
MAYBE IT'S BAIT TO DRAW US IN.
YES. OR A COLOSSAL RED HERRING.
LIKE WE HAVEN'T GOT ENOUGH BALLS O' YARN TO UNTANGLE AS IT IS.
YES, WE MUST UNTANGLE SOME OF THAT.
MADAME, DO YOU HAVE A TELEPHONE?
WHY, YES.
IN THE HALL.
YOU'RE MORE OF A MONSTER MUMMY DEAR, THAN I COULD EVER HAVE IMAGINED.
YOUR SOUL IS BENT AND TWISTED.
SO WHY DO I FIND MYSELF BELIEVING YOU.
— OR D-E-L-A-P-O-R
YES, HAVE HER RUN IT UNDER ALTERNATIVE SPELLINGS AS WELL.
MUNSFORD?
MUNSFORD!
THIS IS IMPOSSIBLE! I MUST SEE THE DEGROOT PLATES AT ONCE! TEMPUS FUGIT! WE MIGHT ALREADY BE TOO LATE! THE WORLD COULD END BEFORE EVEN—
CALM YOURSELF, HARLEY IF WE'RE THAT LATE, THEN THERE IS NO REASON TO HURRY.
AND WE HAVE JUST THE TINIEST PROBLEM WITH THE PLATES...
YES. DON'T WE.
NAN!
OH. I'D BEST MAKE SOME MORE TEA.

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MUNSFORD! THAT WOMAN.. ..DO I KNO...! KNOW HER --DON'T I ???
I DOUBT IT, OLD FRIEND, BUT SHE'S ON OUR SIDE
SO, MISS MERCY, DID YOU FIND OUT ANYTHING OF VALUE FROM MR. WILCOX?
NO. WILCOX WAS A DEAD END.
BOY HOWDY, HAVE I GOT A STORY TO TELL YOU!
LIKEWISE.
BET IT CAN'T BEAT A HUMAN SLUG, MONSTER WORMS AND TWO THOUSAND MANIACS.
I DON'T KNOW. I MET MY MOTHER.
HEAVENS!
I WAS UNDER THE IMPRESSION YOUR MOTHER DIED LONG AGO.
WELL, SHE NEVER DID PAY MUCH ATTENTION TO WHAT ANYONE ELSE THOUGHT
THE WHOLE EXPERIENCE, THOUGH, WAS... ENLIGHTENING.
MIGHT I TAKE THAT TO MEAN WE ARE CLOSER TO LOCATING MR. LOVECRAFT?
I SUPPOSE THAT DEPENDS ON HOW YOU LOOK AT IT
PERSPECTIVE IS IMPORTANT FOR INSTANCE...
..I'VE BEEN GIVING A LOT OF THOUGHT TO THOSE MISSING PLATES FROM THE DEGROOT BOOKS.
WE ASSUMED LOVECRAFT TOOK THEM BECAUSE HE WAS THE LAST TO LOOK AT THE BOOK
BUT WHAT IF WE JUMPED TO CONCLUSIONS ? WHAT IF HE DIDN'T TAKE THEM ?
H P Lovecraft
No 10 Barnes St
Providence R I
PICKMAN S MODEL
By H P Lovecraft
MR. TOBBIN AND I WERE DISTRACTED BY A POLICY DISCUSSION. WHAT MIGHT WE HAVE OVERLOOKED?
AFTER ALL, THERE WAS A THIRD PARTY IN THE ROOM.

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STOLEN?!! THE PLATES HAVE BEEN STOLEN?!
THEY HAVE, AND APPARENTLY MISS MERCY THINKS BY ME.
THAT MAKES NO KINDA SENSE. WHY WOULD HE BE LEADING US AROUND ON A WILD GOOSE CHASE?
MAYBE HE ISN'T. BUT WHEN HAVE YOU SEEN HIM DO ANYTHING REMOTELY 'PRIESTLY'?
MURIATIC ACID? GUNS? SECRET LABORATORIES?
AND LEST YOU FORGET, THE ARCHDIOCESE CLAIMED THEY'D NEVER HEARD OF HIM.
SHE'S GOT ME THERE, PADRE.
I'M SURE HE'LL HAVE A NICE, RATIONAL EXPLANATION.
BUT I HAVE WHAT I CAME FOR. YOU CAN COME WITH ME OR CONTINUE HIS LITTLE CHARADE.
NAN! WAIT!
WHAT THE HECK? IS THERE SOMETHING I'M MISSING?
I'M AFRAID ANYTHING I SAY NOW IS SUSPECT.
GO WHERE YE LIST, LAD.
...HOW'D SHE KNOW ABOUT THE GUNS?
NAN!
YOU'RE LETTING THEM GO?
I THOUGHT THEY WERE SO IMPORTANT TO OUR SUCCESS.
THEY ARE.
THEY'LL BE BACK BEFORE WE NEED THEM.
SEEING THE FUTURE NOW, ARE YOU?
ACTUALLLY, REMEMBERING THE PAST
WE HAVE MORE PRESSING MATTERS TO ATTTEND TO IN BOSTON.

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SO MANY PEOPLE... GOODNESS. SURELY ONE OF THEM CAN FIND HOWARD. I'M STARTING TO WORRY
EXCUSE ME, DO YOU GENTLEMEN THINK THAT THAT ..UM, GENTLEMEN ???
..HELLO ?
OH!
LETH
THE FORMULAE ARE FADING AS FAST AS I CAN COPY!
THEN COPY MAS RAPIDO !!! TILLINGHAST'S NOTES ARE AT THE CORE OF OUR WORK. WE CANNOT FAIL NOW.
YES, HURRY ONCE THEY'RE GONE, THEY'RE IRREPLACEBALE.
PERHAPS I WILL FINISH SOONER IF YOU'LL STOP INTERRUPTING ME!
THERE! DONE!
EXCELLENT! NOW LET US SEE IF WE CAN PRESERVE AS MUCH OF THE JOURNAL AS---
--POSSIBLE...
COME THEN, WE MUST APPLY THE CALCULATIONS TO THE MASTER CONTROLLER. LET US HOPE YOU COPIED CORRECTLY.

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MAGUS? MAGUS, CAN YOU HEAR ME? THIS IS ADEPTUS BELVAN.

I hear you. I see that the adjustments I had you make to the signals communicator were successful.

Mundy's unaware?

AND KRESKIN MISSED THE ERRORS IN THE JOURNAL. I DOUBT THEY'LL HAVE TIME TO DISCOVER THEM.

The ceremony is on schedule?

YES. EVENING AFTER NEXT, AT MY HOME.

The loss of the Mi'thun is regrettable, but we have at least separated the old man and the boy.

But that's why one makes backup plans. I believe all the pieces are in place at last.

IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE I SHOULD DO?

No. My body will be safe in the hospital for now. I'll be back in time for the ceremony...

Let the Ancient One do the hard work. Then we shall step forward to claim the prize.

To Be Continued

Book 3

Far Off Drums

begins

Sept. 2, 2011

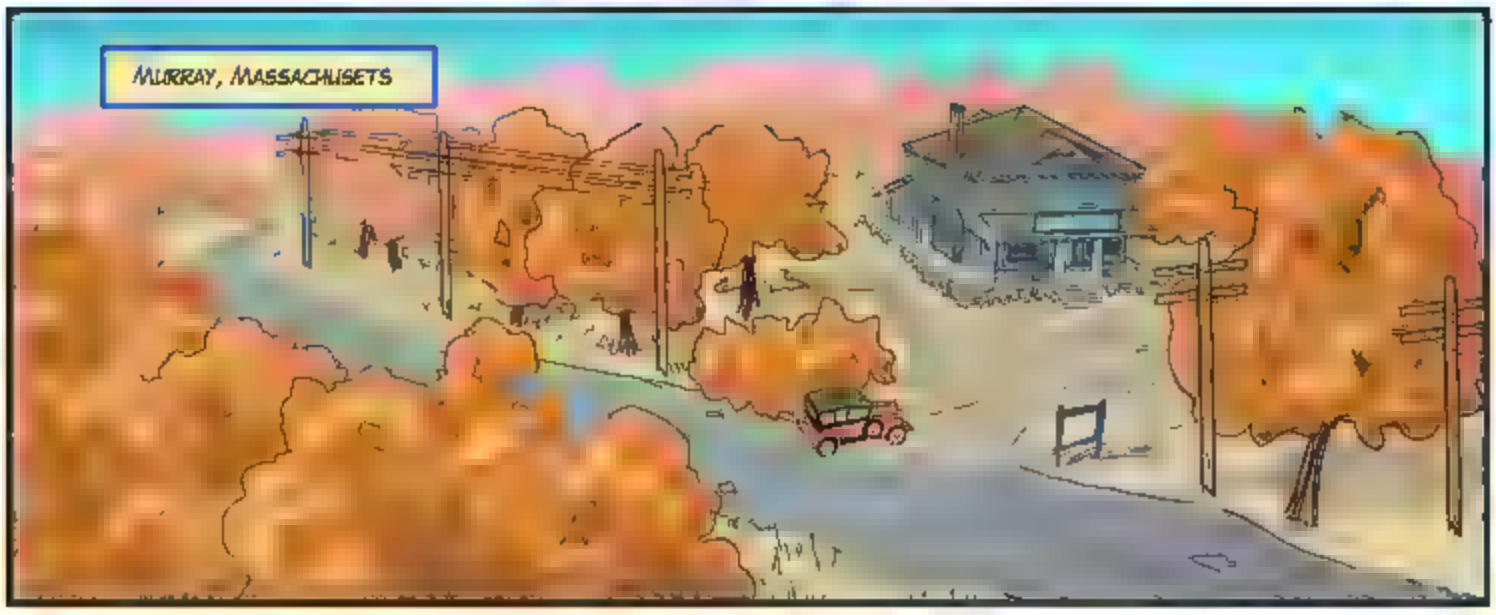
Yelo is missing

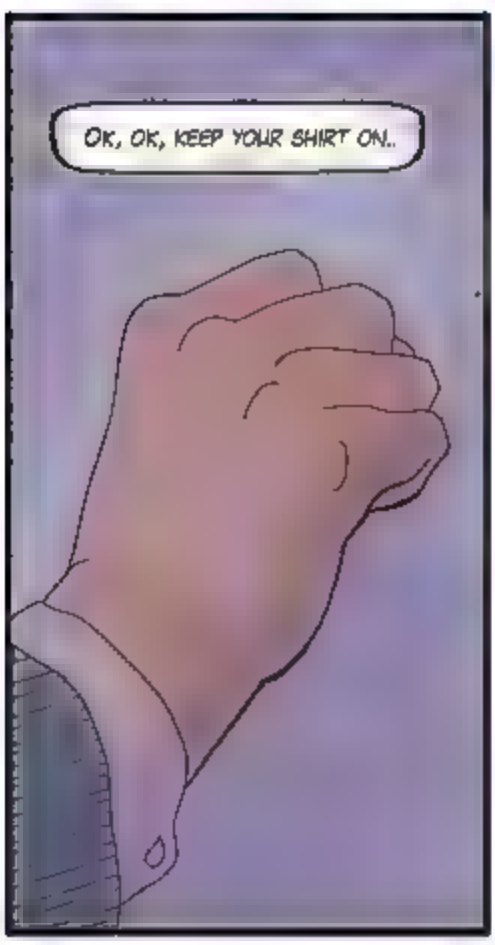
Lovecraft is Missing

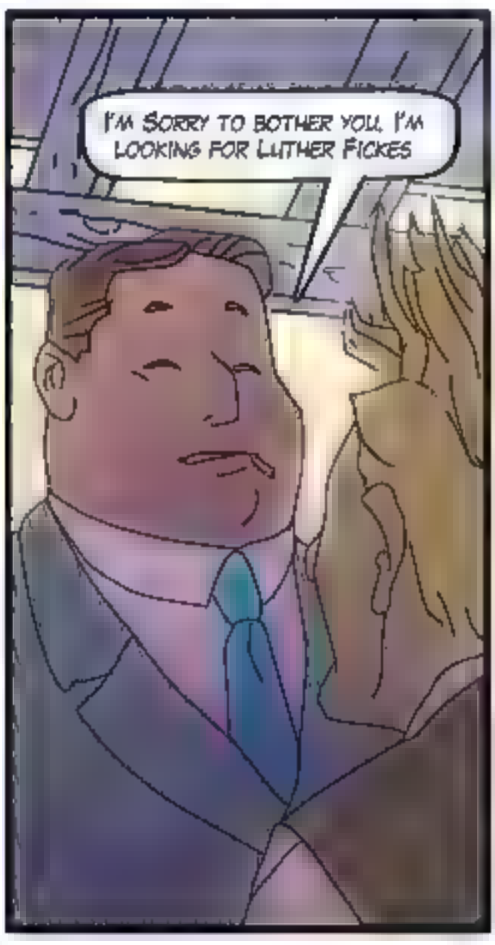
Book 5
starts
Sept. 2, 2011

Lovecraft is missing

Book 5: Far Off Drums







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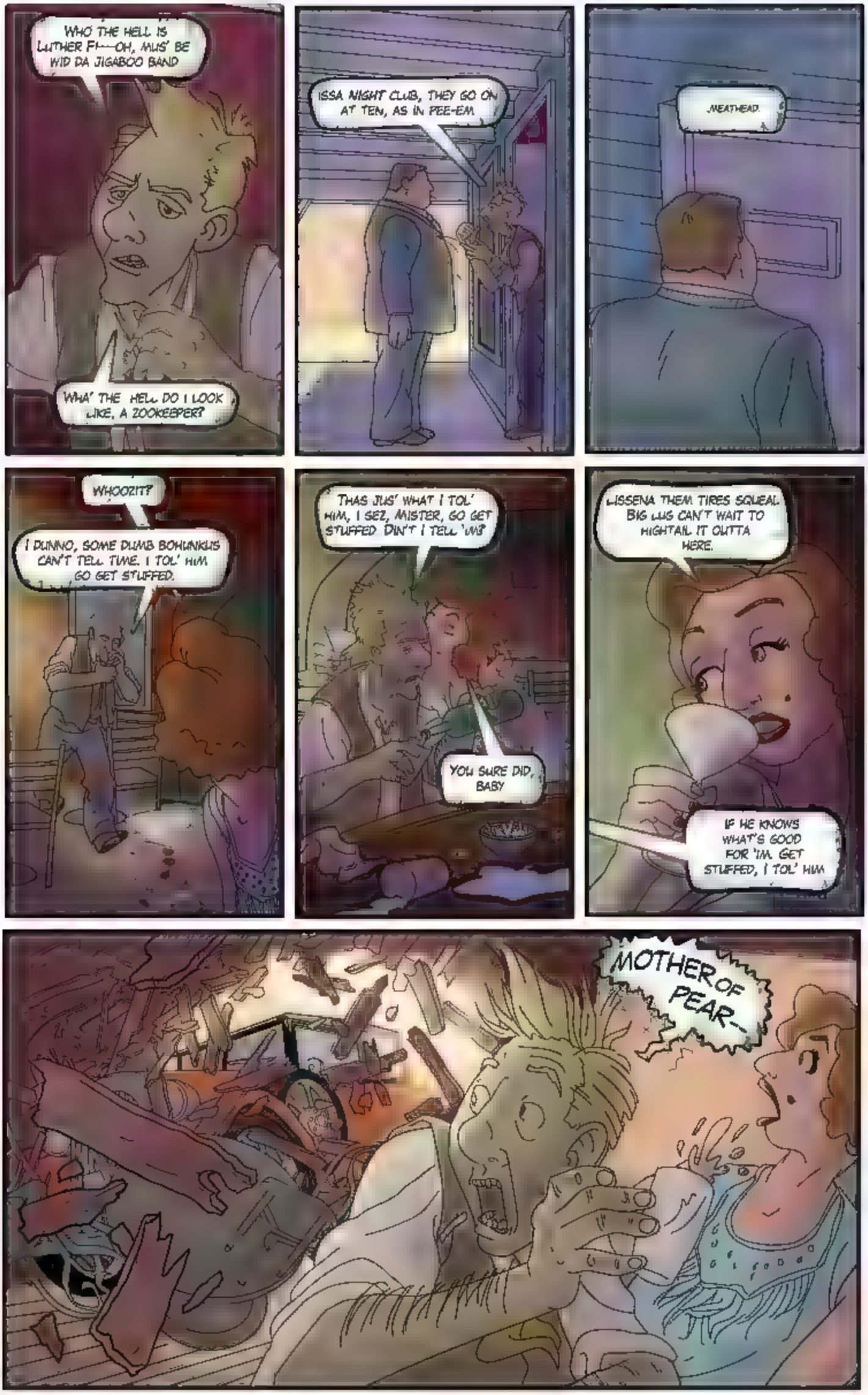
WHO THE HELL IS LUTHER F!---OH, MUS' BE WID DA JIGABOO BAND
WHA' THE HELL DO I LOOK LIKE, A ZOOKEEPER?
ISSA NIGHT CLUB, THEY GO ON AT TEN, AS IN PEE-EM
MEATHEAD.
WHOOZIT?
I DUNNO, SOME DUMB BOHUNKUS CAN'T TELL TIME. I TOL' HIM GO GET STUFFED.
THAS JUS' WHAT I TOL' HIM, I SEZ, MISTER, GO GET STUFFED DIN'T I TELL 'IM?
YOU SURE DID, BABY
LISSENA THEM TIRES SQUEAL. BIG LUG CAN'T WAIT TO HIGHTAIL IT OUTTA HERE.
IF HE KNOWS WHAT'S GOOD FOR 'IM. GET STUFFED, I TOL' HIM
MOTHER OF PEAR--

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CRAZY BASU—STOP! I DIN'T MEAN IT! SO HELP ME, I DIN'T---
OWJEEZUSJEEZUS ----
I HOPE YOU'LL FORGIVE MY STUTTER. IT'S BEEN A LIFELONG SOURCE OF EMBARRASSMENT
I'VE WORKED VERY HARD TO OVERCOME IT BUT I'M AFRAID I STILL MANGLE MY WORDS SOMETIMES.
WHAT I MEANT TO SAY WAS....
...I'M LOOKING FOR LUTHER FICKES.
TH-THEY WENT TO MAKE A REC-RECORD--
--B-BEHIND TH' FURNITURE FACTORY GO BACK EAST TO TH-THE FIRST TURN, THEN TWO M-M-MILES SOUTH, RIGHT SIDE A' THE ROAD....
LIKE SOLOMON.

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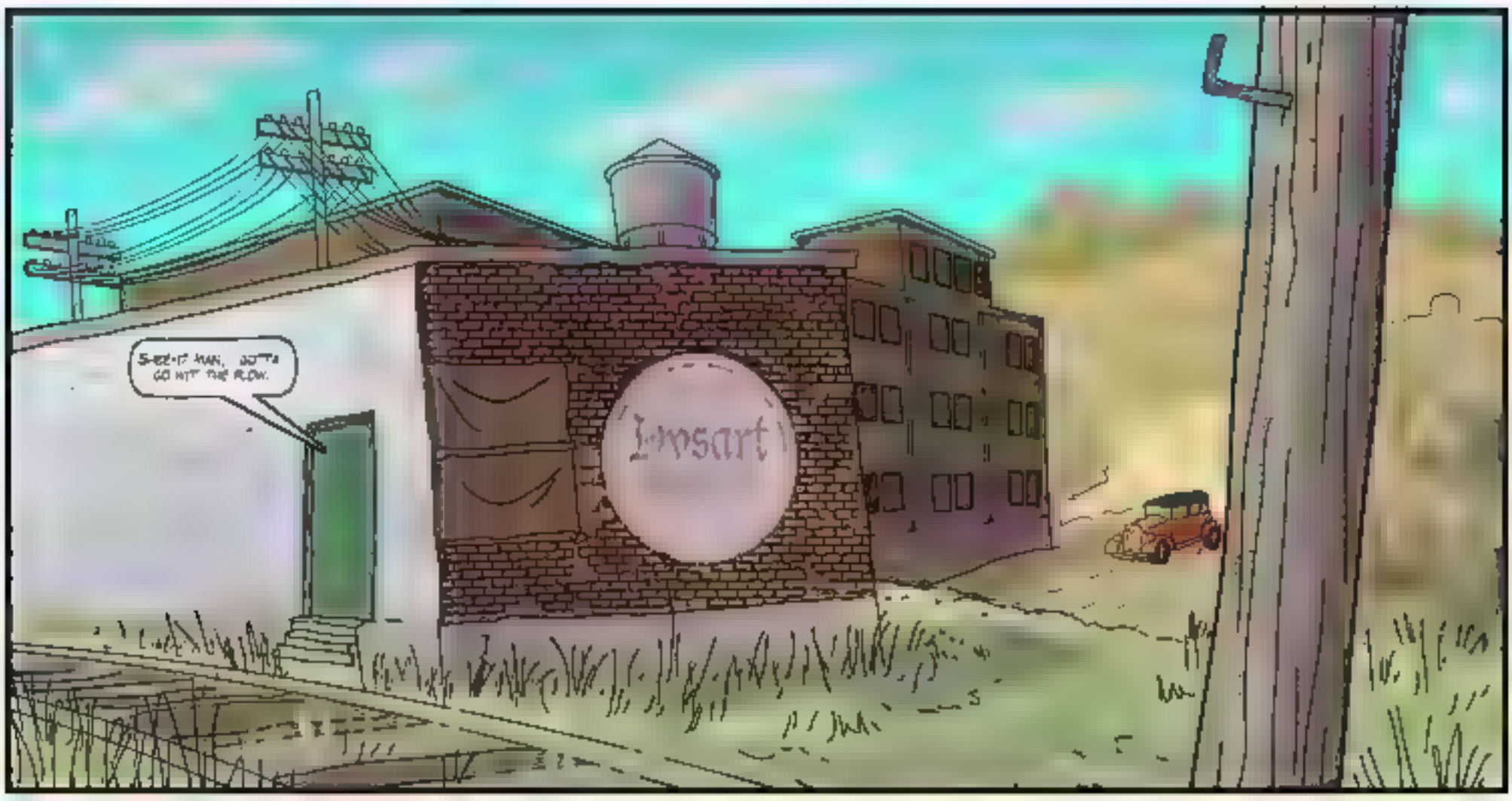

YOU'RE KNOCKING THE NEEDLE RIGHT OFF THE WAX. YOU COME RIGHT TO HERE FOR YOUR SOLO, THEN GET OUTTA THE WAY FOR THE NEXT GUY.
NO DRUMS, CAIN'T PLAY TOO LOUD, GO HERE, STAND THERE. THIS IS LIKE A DAY JOB.

CLOWNS, THE WHOLE BUNCH A YEZ
YEAH, CAN I HELP YOU?
LOOKING FOR LUTHER FICKES
UH-OH. WHAT'S HE DONE NOW?
TOLDJA NOT TO LET HIM OUT BY HISSELF.

HE'S A FRIEND. I GOT SOMETHING FOR HIM.
NOW AIN'T LUTHER IN THE HIGH COTTON! GOT HISSELF AN OFAY MESSENGER BOY IN A 'SPENSIVE SUIT
DON'T PAY NO ATTENTION TO HIM, MISTER. LUTHER'S OUT BACK--

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--LIKES TO IMPROVISE AROUND THE TRANSFORMER HUM.
NICE LICKS, LUTHER TRANSFORMER BLUES?
GOT SOMETHING THE OLD MAN WANTS YOU TO TAKE A LOOK AT.
THIS IS THE ONE FOR YOU.
AND I WILL LOOK AT IT, I SURELY WILL.
BUT THIS... THIS IS A THING OF BEAUTY
COOL AIR INDEED.

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OK, BOHUNKUS, LET'S SEE HOW TOUGH YOU REALLY ARE.
FRIENDS OF YOURS?
BUSINESS ASSOCIATES.
DON'T DO SOMETHING YOU'RE GOING TO BE SORRY FOR.
WHAT? YOU THREATENIN' ME WITH A SHOTGUN IN YOUR FACE.
NO THREAT. JUST GOOD ADVICE.
YEAH, WELL, YOU CAN TAKE YOUR ADVICE AND SHOVE--
LIKE BEOWULF.
BIG MISTAKE, PORKY. GONNA HAVE TO TRIM YOU DOWN TO SIZE.

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YOU GUYS MIGHT WANT TO COUNT TO TEN BEFORE YOU GET WORKED UP.
..OR AT LEAST SIX.
LUTHER....
RIGHT WITH YOU.
OH, NOW THAT, THAT IS STYLE!
I GET THE IDEA HE'S IN KIND OF A HURRY.
DON'T DOUBT IT
YOU GOT PAGE TWO THERE?
SIR---

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BOSTON
SIR?
SIR?
HUH?
YOUR REPLIES, SIR. ALL SEVEN.
OH. SURE... YEAH....
WAIT A MINUTE..SEVEN? I ONLY SENT SIX--
NO SIR, YOU SENT AND PAID FOR SEVEN. HERE'S THE RECEIPT.
I'M SURE I...OKAY, WHAT THE HECK...THANKS.
AND?
REPLIES TO ALL OF THEM.. AND THEN SOME.
ALL HIS FRIENDS-- DERLETH, EDDY, MS. GREENE, LOVEMAN, LONG, SMITH. NOBODY'S SEEN HIM.
BUT THIS GUY---ENNIS PYBURN. WHO THE HECK IS THAT?
WHAT DOES IT SAY?
"BRATTLEBORO, VT ", FOLLOWED BY NUMBERS. " 373/6 4201937"
VERMONT?
OK. ENOUGH IS ENOUGH.

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NONE OF THIS MAKES SENSE IF YOU REALLY THINK ABOUT IT

AND WE'RE NOT THINKING ABOUT IT, WHICH ALSO DOESN'T MAKE SENSE.

NO OFFENSE, WIN, BUT YOU ARE KIND OF FRESH OFF THE TOMATO TRUCK.

I CAN'T ARGUE WITH THAT

BUT OCTOPUS-PEOPLE. MONSTER BABIES. IMMORTAL MAGICIANS. THINGS THAT OUGHT TO KILL US OR AT LEAST DRIVE US STARK-STARING CRAZY.

YOU CAN'T TELL ME THE BIG CITY IS THAT DIFFFERENT FROM TOUGH LUCK.

CRIMINEEE, YOU SAW YOUR MOM GUT YOUR DAD LIKE A PIG AND YOU'RE WALKING AROUND LIKE EVERYTHING IS CRACKERJACK.

YOU'RE MAKING A VERY SHAKY ASSUMPTION THAT MUMMY WAS TELLING THE TRUTH. THAT WAS NEVER HER STRONG SUIT

I HAVE NO MEMORY OF ANY OF THAT.

OK, YOU JUST DROPPED BY A RUINED CRYPT WITH A FRIEND OF YOURS TO JAW WITH THE GHOST OF YOUR DEAD MOTHER.

NOW IT ALL MAKES SENSE

GIVEN YOUR PROFESSION, I'D THINK YOU'D BE VERY COMFORTABLE WITH THE EVENTS OF THE LAST FEW DAYS.

ARE YOU LISTENING TO YOURSELF? I WRITE FICTION, AS IN MADE UP THINGS LIKE THIS DON'T REALLY HAPPEN!

I TRY TO THINK IT THROUGH, BUT IT FADES AWAY. IT'S LIKE THE PLEIADES, THE MORE YOU LOOK RIGHT AT THEM, THE LESS YOU CAN SEE THEM.

BUT BEFORE THE THOUGHT FADES AWAY, LET ME ASK YOU THIS—

HOW'D YOU KNOW ABOUT FATHER JACKEY'S GUNS?

WHAT? HOW COULD I MISS THEM? I WAS STANDING RIGHT... ..I MEAN, I SAW..

I...I DON'T KNOW...I WASN'T THERE, WAS I?

SEE WHAT I MEAN?

I'M GOING TO WRITE THIS STUFF DOWN BEFORE IT FADES AWAY AGAIN...

UH...NOW WHAT WAS I SAYING?

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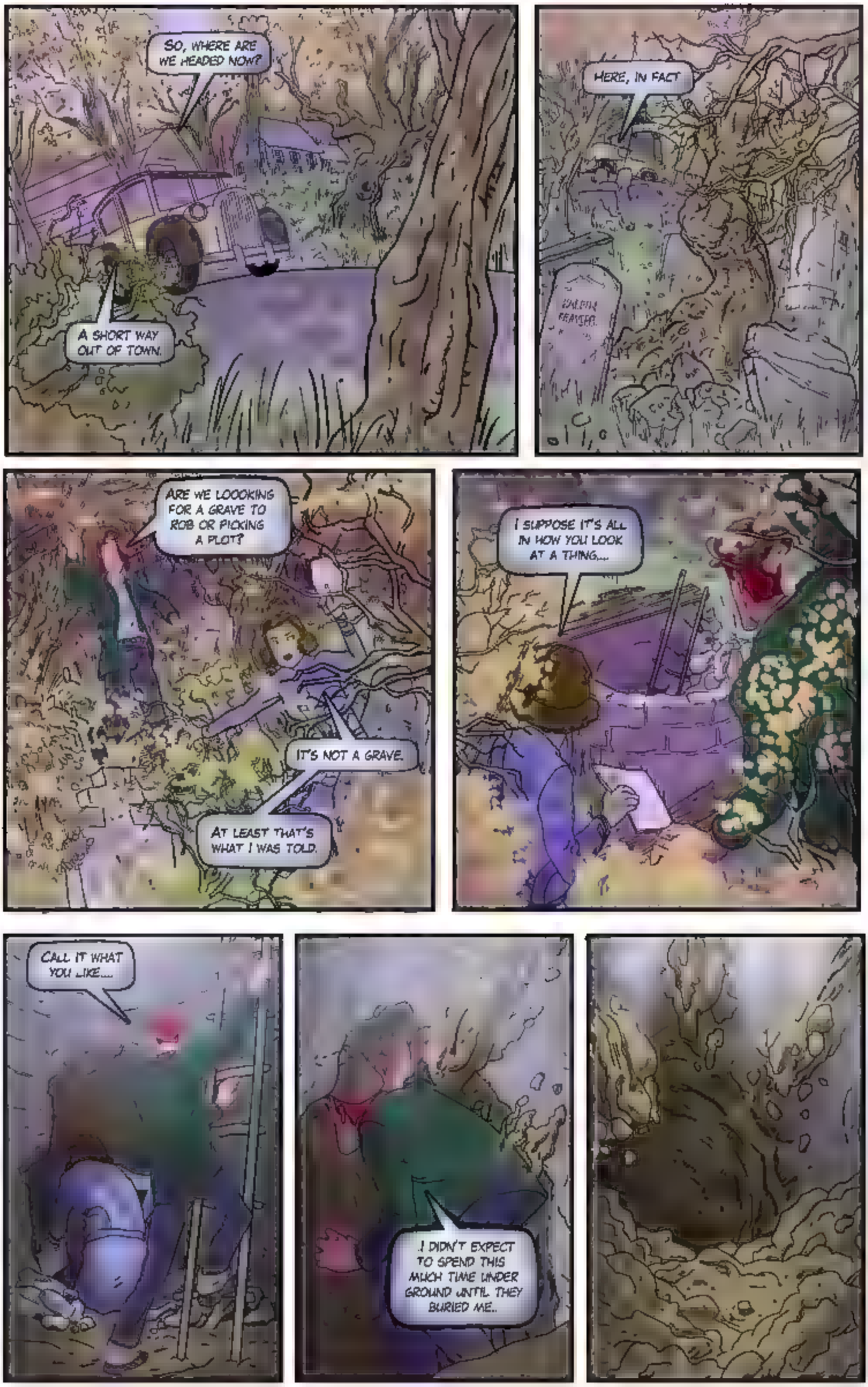
SO, WHERE ARE WE HEADED NOW?
A SHORT WAY OUT OF TOWN.
HERE, IN FACT
ARE WE LOOOKING FOR A GRAVE TO ROB OR PICKING A PLOT?
IT'S NOT A GRAVE.
AT LEAST THAT'S WHAT I WAS TOLD.
I SUPPOSE IT'S ALL IN HOW YOU LOOK AT A THING....
CALL IT WHAT YOU LIKE....
I DIDN'T EXPECT TO SPEND THIS MUCH TIME UNDER GROUND UNTIL THEY BURIED ME..

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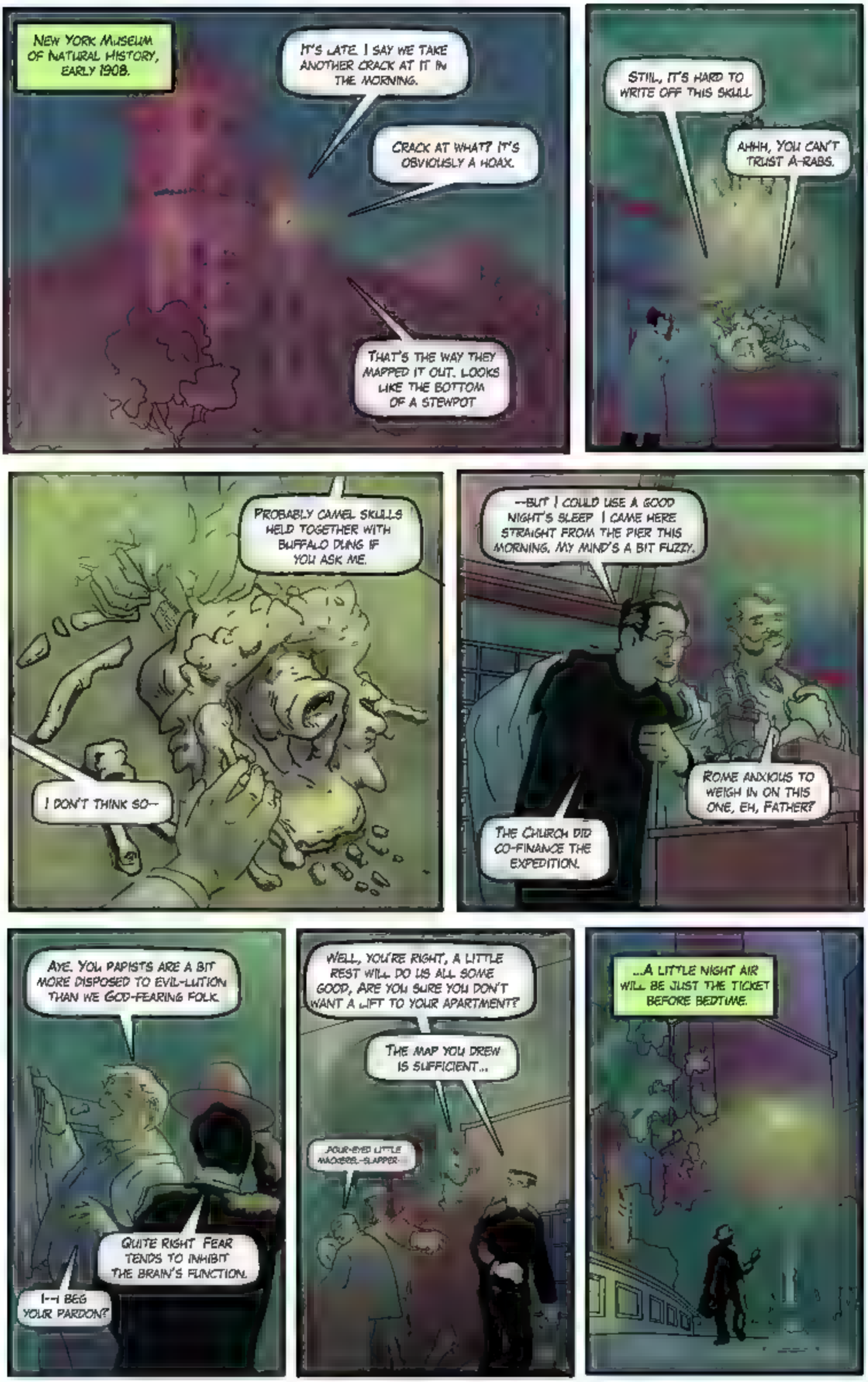
NEW YORK MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY, EARLY 1908.
IT'S LATE. I SAY WE TAKE ANOTHER CRACK AT IT IN THE MORNING.
CRACK AT WHAT? IT'S OBVIOUSLY A HOAX.
THAT'S THE WAY THEY MAPPED IT OUT. LOOKS LIKE THE BOTTOM OF A STEWPOT
STILL, IT'S HARD TO WRITE OFF THIS SKULL
AHHH, YOU CAN'T TRUST A-RABS.
PROBABLY CAMEL SKULLS HELD TOGETHER WITH BUFFALO DUNG IF YOU ASK ME.
I DON'T THINK SO--
--BUT I COULD USE A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP. I CAME HERE STRAIGHT FROM THE PIER THIS MORNING. MY MIND'S A BIT FUZZY.
ROME ANXIOUS TO WEIGH IN ON THIS ONE, EH, FATHER?
THE CHURCH DID CO-FINANCE THE EXPEDITION.
AYE. YOU PAPISTS ARE A BIT MORE DISPOSED TO EVIL-LUTION THAN WE GOD-FEARING FOLK.
QUITE RIGHT. FEAR TENDS TO INHIBIT THE BRAIN'S FUNCTION.
I--I BEG YOUR PARDON?
WELL, YOU'RE RIGHT, A LITTLE REST WILL DO US ALL SOME GOOD. ARE YOU SURE YOU DON'T WANT A LIFT TO YOUR APARTMENT?
THE MAP YOU DREW IS SUFFICIENT...
FOUR-EYED LITTLE MACKEREL-SLAPPER.
...A LITTLE NIGHT AIR WILL BE JUST THE TICKET BEFORE BEDTIME.

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SILLY ME, ASSUMING THERE WOULD BE STREET SIGNS...
I WONDER IF I CAN STILL GET A CAB--
AT THIS HOUR.
WOULD YOU LIKE THE GUIDANCE OF ONE LONG PRACTICED IN THESE ENVIRONS AND POSSESSED OF LOCAL INFORMATION PROFOUNDLY DEEPER THAN ANY WHICH AN OBVIOUS NEWCOMER COULD POSSIBLY HAVE OBTAINED?
..WELL...
ER...YES, I SUPPOSE I WOULD..

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THE ADDRESS IS—
T'WON'T BE NECESSSARY SOR
IT HAS ALL BEEN ARRANGED.
THAT'S MY GROWING CONCERN.
FATHER LAUDER IS TIGHT WITH A NICKLE, I KNOW—
I DIDN'T EXPECT A ROOM AT THE RITZ—
—BUT I'M NOT A PENITENT, FOR THE LOVE OF C—
YOU, ER, WERE SENT BY FATHER LAUDER WEREN'T YOU?
DRIVER?
DRIVER AM I SUPPOSED TO FOLLOW?
DRIVER?
WELL AS FINDING THE WAY BACK ON MY OWN SEEMS UNLIKELY—
DO YOU KNOW OF AN INEXPENSIVE RESTAURANT NEARBY?
OR AM I INVITED TO TEA?

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GOT THE LAST OF THE SCUMSUCKERS BOOKED. GOT HERE AS SOON AS I COULD.

IF WE'RE TAKING THE AFTERNOON OFF, THOUGH, I'D RATHER GO TO THE PICTURE SHOW

THE OLD MAN WANTS US TO FOLLOW UP ON THIS ARTIST FELLA WILCOX.

OUGHT TO ARREST HIM JUST FOR THIS MONSTROSITY

INSPECTOR... -- I THINK MR. WILCOX IS IN TROUBLE---HE WON'T OPEN HIS DOOR...AND HE SOUNDS ILL.

WHAT?!! BLAST!

HE'S LIKELY GONE OUT THE WINDOW BY NOW.

"I'LL ANNOUNCE YOU" MY ARSE! SHOULD'VE KNOWN BETTER!

WILCOX! OPEN THE BLASTED DOOR! I CAN HEAR YOU IN THERE.

I'M GETTING GOOD AND TIRED OF PEOPLE CALLING ME HOWARD.

HOLY MOTHER OF GOD!

MMM-MMORRE...

WHHHHEEE...PUUDDDDDDR

MMMMoooorrrr

© 2012 ...ATI

P--Pppp-Pppppp__pppp--

WE SEEN AS BAD 'N WORSE IN THE WAR, EH, INSPECTOR.

M GOING TO BE SI——UST SICK.

SURE PUTRESCENT CORPSES STACKED THREE FEET HIGH.

BODIES FUSED TOGETHER BY EXPLOSIONS.

THEN AGAIN, THEY WERE DEAD.

NOT SURE BULLETS OR BOMBS WOULD DO YOU MUCH GOOD, WILCOX.

MAYBE THIS IS JUST THE SUFFERING PART OF YOUR MISERABLE 'ARTISTIC' LIFE

SHOVEL THAT MUCK IN A BUCKET AND WE'LL TAKE IT WITH US

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NOTHING...NOTHING...
THERE MUST BE SOMETHING IN THE RECORDS.
SOMEWHERE
SOMEWHERE...
AH... THIS WILL HAVE TO DO.
I CAN MAKE IT WORK IN SPITE OF THE POOR TRANSLATION. "GOAT WITH A HUNDRED YOUNG." REALLY

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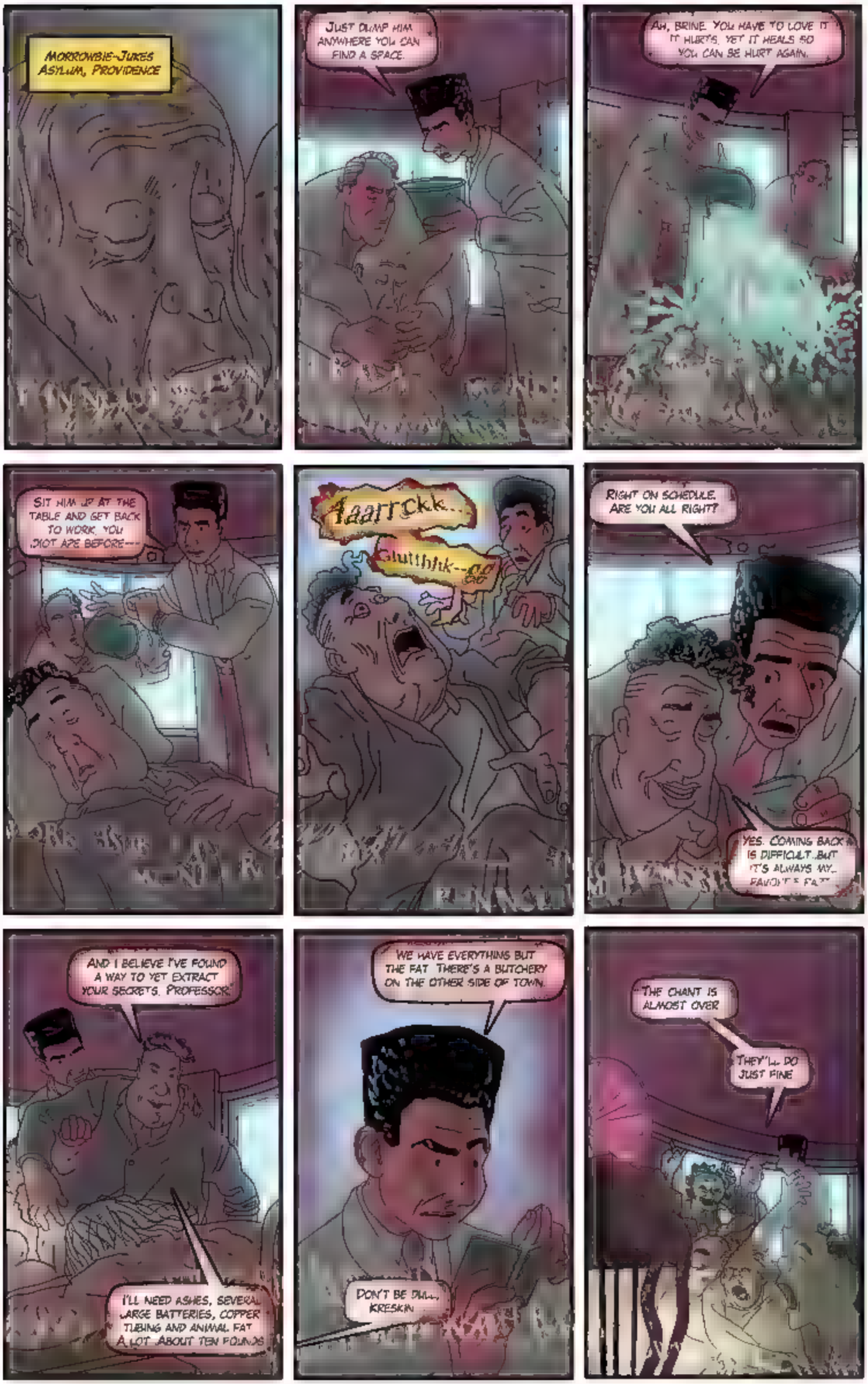
MORROWBIE-JUKES ASYLUM, PROVIDENCE
JUST DUMP HIM ANYWHERE YOU CAN FIND A SPACE.
AH, BRINE. YOU HAVE TO LOVE IT IT HURTS. YET IT HEALS SO YOU CAN BE HURT AGAIN.
SIT HIM UP AT THE TABLE AND GET BACK TO WORK. YOU IDIOT ARE BEFORE---
Aaarrckk...
Gluthhk--gg
RIGHT ON SCHEDULE. ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
YES. COMING BACK IS DIFFICULT..BUT IT'S ALWAYS MY FAVORITE PART
AND I BELIEVE I'VE FOUND A WAY TO YET EXTRACT YOUR SECRETS, PROFESSOR.
I'LL NEED ASHES, SEVERAL LARGE BATTERIES, COPPER TUBING AND ANIMAL FAT A LOT. ABOUT TEN POUNDS
WE HAVE EVERYTHING BUT THE FAT. THERE'S A BUTCHERY ON THE OTHER SIDE OF TOWN.
DON'T BE DUM... KRESKIN
THE CHANT IS ALMOST OVER
THEY'LL DO JUST FINE

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COME. THE FINAL DETAILS ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT
...AH, YES, CERTAINLY, BUT THE MACHINES..
SHOULDN'T WE BE MAKING THE FINAL ADJUSTMENTS?
THE MACHINES ARE FINISHED. HALSEY IS PREPARING THEM FOR TRANSFER AS WE SPEAK.
BUT YOU SAID— THEN WHAT ARE THE NOTES FOR ?
NEVER PUT ALL YOUR EGGS IN THE SINGLE BASKET, MARIPOSA.
THE GREAT WORK MUST NOT BE COMPROMISED THERE IS SOMETHING YOU AREN'T TELLING ME.
AH, YES. THE "GREAT WORK."
BRINGING ENLIGHTENMENT AND TRUTH TO THE WORLD. WE ARE VERY NOBLE AND SELFLESS, YES?
BUT I ASK MYSELF, WHAT IF THE HUMAN MIND IS NOT READY FOR SUCH?
WHOEVER WROTE THESE NOTES AND FORMULAE LOOKED BEYOND THE FRINGES OF REALITY, TO AN OUTER WORLD. OF MONSTERS...OR GODS?
BEFORE WE UNLEASH THE MIND OF A GOD ON THE EARTH, SHOULD WE NOT BE PREPARED? SHOULD WE NOT KNOW HOW TO CONSTRAIN A GOD?
AND WITH THE HELP OF OUR UNKNOWN GENIUS HERE, WHO BETTER TO CONTROL IT THAN WE?
NO ONE, ACTUALLY THOUGH COUNT ST GERMAIN MAY FEEL DIFFERENTLY
THE COUNT! FAH! DO YOU REALLY BELIEVE HE SEEKS ENLIGHTENMENT?
NO. HE HAS OTHER GOALS WHICH HE DOES NOT SHARE WITH US. IT IS IN OUR BEST INTERESTS TO HAVE THE BACK-UP PLAN. BETTER STILL TO HAVE SEVERAL
AFTER ALL, I MIGHT HAVE REALLY MISSED THOSE SMALL ERRORS IN THESE FORMULAE HAD I NOT EAVESDROPPED ON YOUR CONVERSATION.
NO, DO NOT RUN. I BEAR YOU NO MALICE
YOU BETRAYED THE COUNT, YOU BETRAYED YOUR FRIEND. WHY WOULD I NOT EXPECT YOU TO BETRAY ME?

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I BLUSH TO SAY, I HAVE NOT BEEN COMPLETELY HONEST WITH THE REST OF YOU, EITHER. I AM SURPRISED ANY OF YOU BELIEVED I SOUGHT IMMORTALITY FOR THIS DECAYING, CRUMBLING BODY.
NOT WHEN I CAN SHIFT NOW MY MIND FROM VESSEL TO VESSEL, EXPERIENCING INFINITE VARIETY, LEARNING ALL LIFE'S SECRETS.
AT FIRST I THOUGHT ONLY OF THE HUMAN, BUT THEN I THINK, AH, WHY NOT ALSO THE GOD? YES YES YES I SAY
IN ANY CASE, I REFUSE TO BE ANOTHER OF DR. WEST'S FAILED EXPERIMENTS.
THAT SHOULD BE ENOUGH, I THINK
HAD I KNOWN PROFESSOR ZANN WAS SO WELL DEFENDED PSYCHICALY I WOULD HAVE TRIED SOMETHING LIKE THIS A LONG TIME AGO.
IT'S JUST SO DISTASTEFUL.
BUT NEEDS MUST WHEN THE DEVIL DRIVES, EH?
SEE YOU IN JUST A MOMENT, PROFESSOR
WHOOSH

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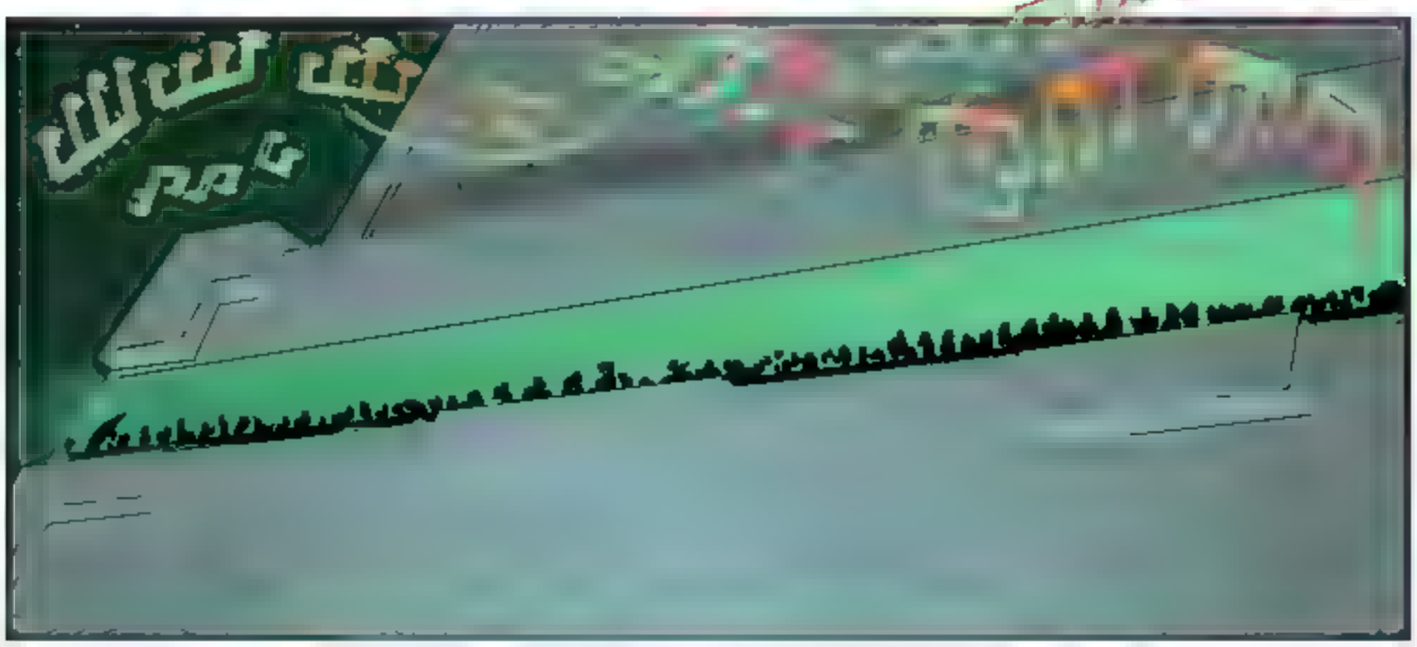

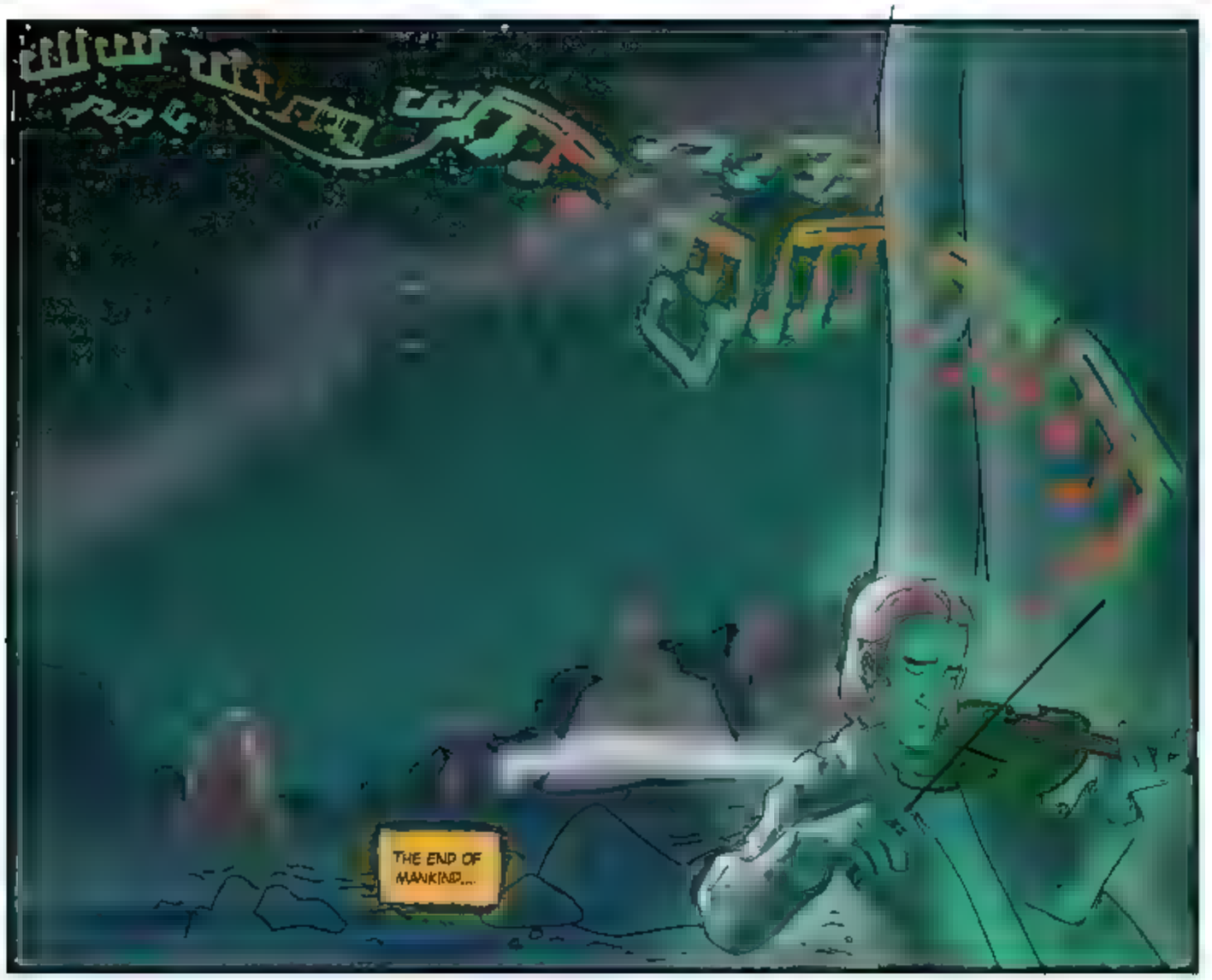

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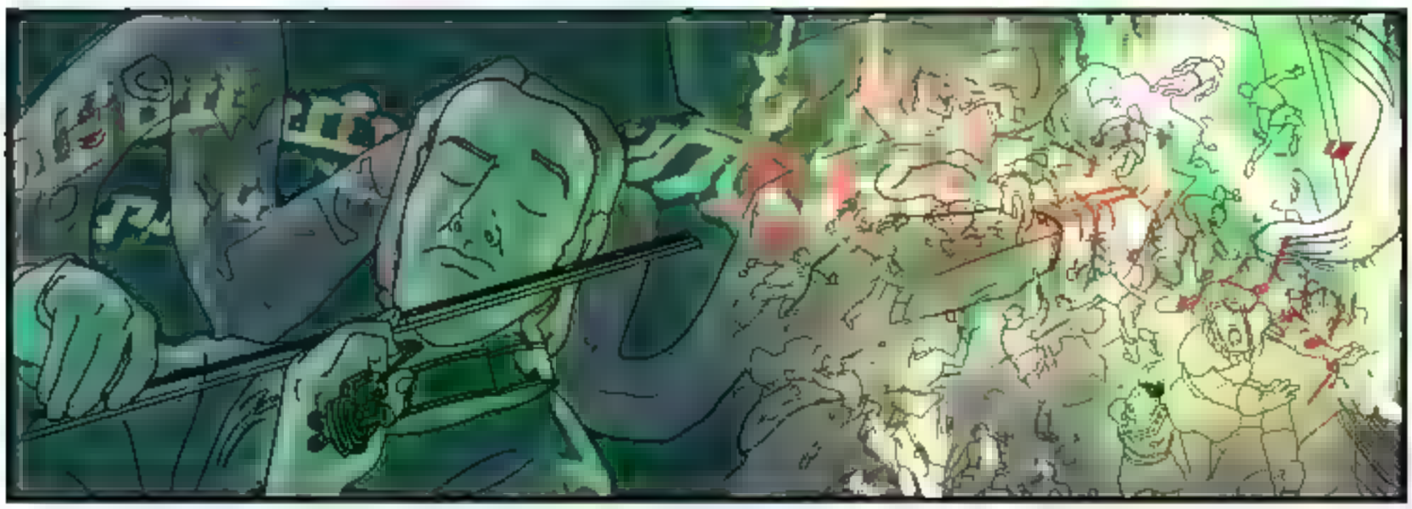
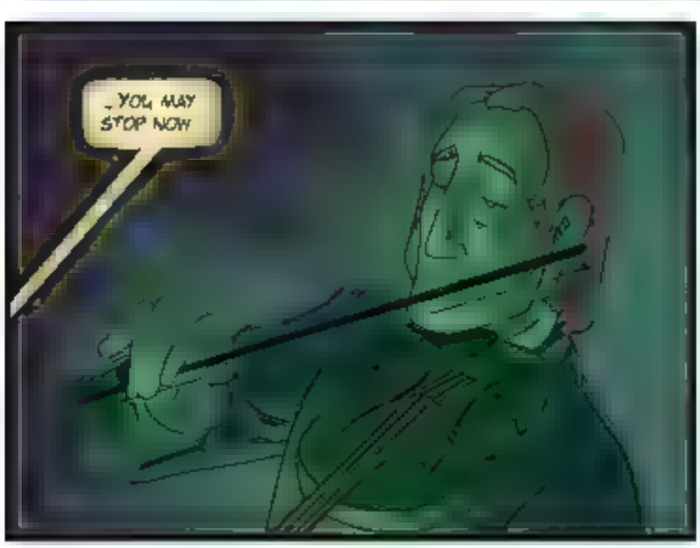


ADD A CHORUS LINE AND YOU'LL DO FIFTY TWO WEEKS AT THE HIPPODROME, STANDING ROOM ONLY.
OR IS THIS A NEW ESCHATOLOGICAL REVELATION ?
I'LL BE HAPPY TO TAKE IT UP WITH THE BISHOP



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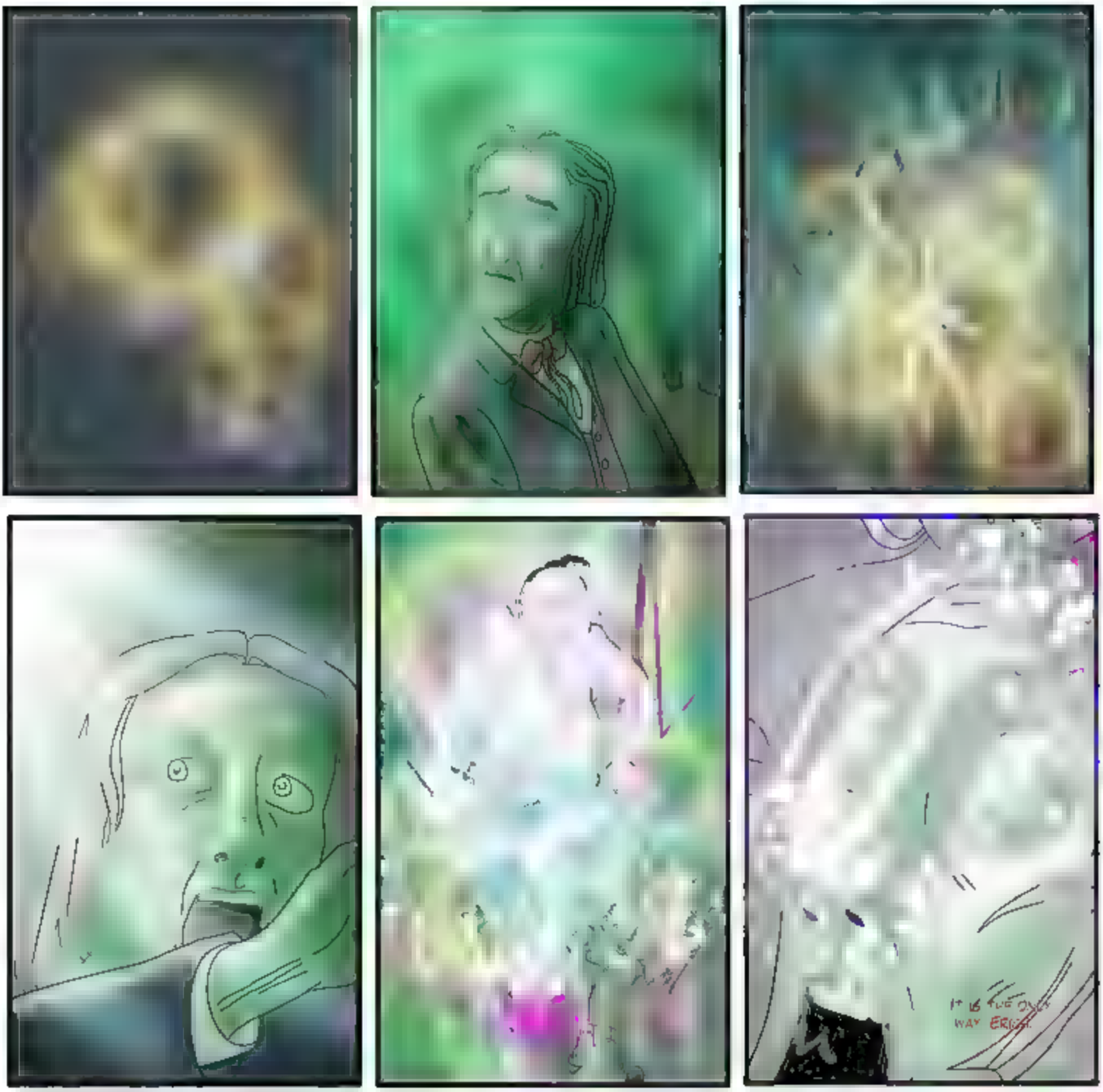

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CLEAR? CLEAR FOR WHAT?
FOR THE TASK THAT HAS BEEN SET FOR YOU.
FINDING THE SKELETON MAKES YOU THE CATALYST AND ARCHITECT OF ALL THAT IS TO COME, FOR GOOD OR ILL.
THE OUTER MONSTROSITIES ARE ON THE MOVE. WE HAVE MERELY BOUGHT YOU TIME.
..AND LESS THAN TWENTY YEARS OF THAT BEFORE ZANN CAN NO LONGER CONTAIN THE INEVITABLE.
THE REST IS UP TO YOU.
DON'T KNOW WHICH MAKES MORE SENSE, THAT THIS IS A FEVER-INDUCED NIGHTMARE OR THE LUNATIC'S BALL.
I'M LEANING TOWARD THE CLAM CHOWDER I ATE FOR LUNCH HAVING GONE OVER.
OUR WAYS ARE NOT YOUR WAYS.
HOPEFULLY SOMEONE SOMEWHERE IS APPLYING A NICE COLD CLOTH TO MY FEVERED BROW
I'LL JUST TAKE MY THINGS NOW. I HAVE AN ENGAGEMENT WITH A SOFT BED AND A BOTTLE OF SCOTCH.
YOU MISAPPPREHEND, GOOD SOR.
'TIS NOT A CHOICE.

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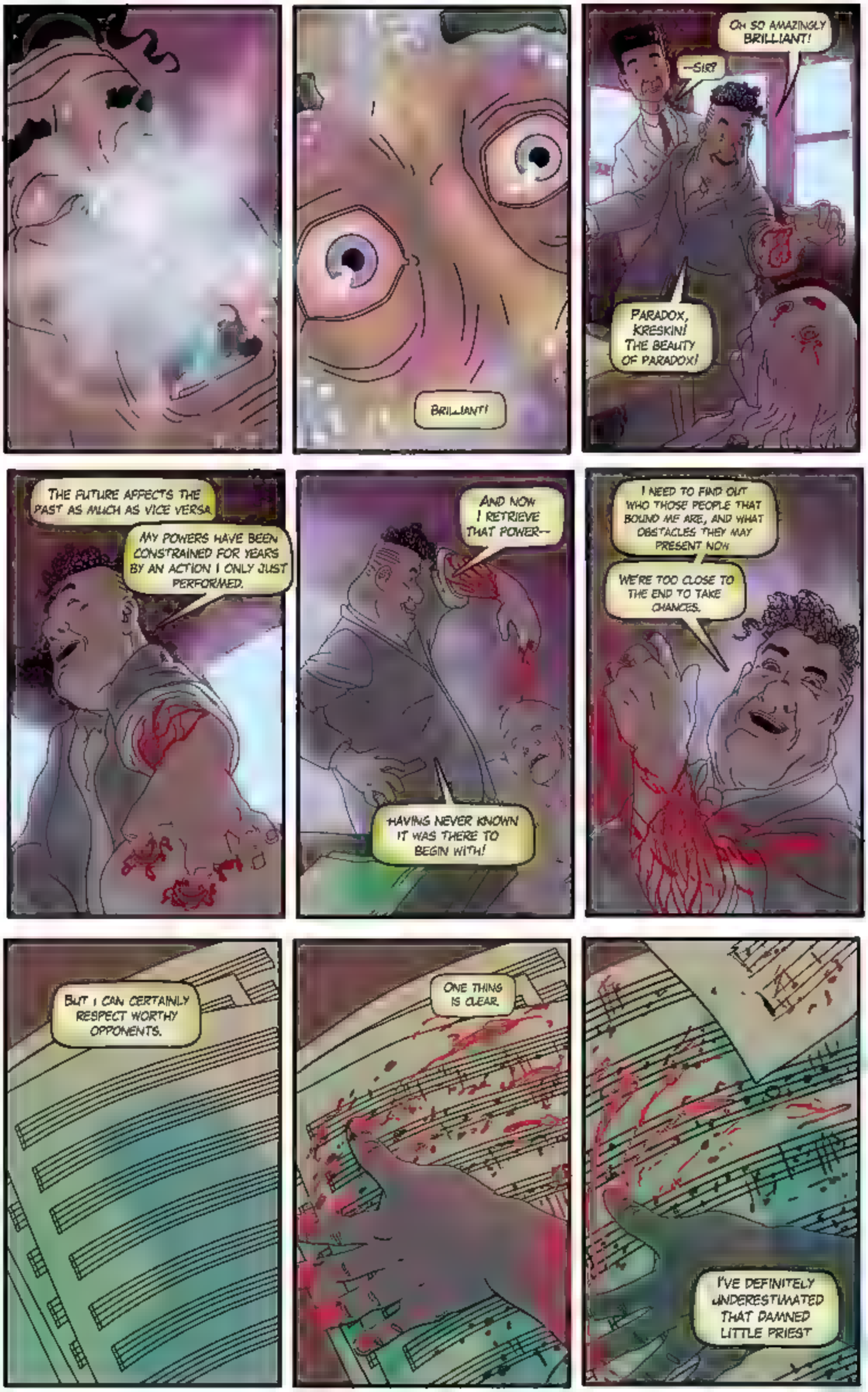
BRILLIANT!
--SIR?
OH SO AMAZINGLY BRILLIANT!
PARADOX, KRESKIN! THE BEAUTY OF PARADOX!
THE FUTURE AFFECTS THE PAST AS MUCH AS VICE VERSA.
MY POWERS HAVE BEEN CONSTRAINED FOR YEARS BY AN ACTION I ONLY JUST PERFORMED.
AND NOW I RETRIEVE THAT POWER--
HAVING NEVER KNOWN IT WAS THERE TO BEGIN WITH!
I NEED TO FIND OUT WHO THOSE PEOPLE THAT BOUND ME ARE, AND WHAT OBSTACLES THEY MAY PRESENT NOW
WE'RE TOO CLOSE TO THE END TO TAKE CHANCES.
BUT I CAN CERTAINLY RESPECT WORTHY OPPONENTS.
ONE THING IS CLEAR.
I'VE DEFINITELY UNDERESTIMATED THAT DAMNED LITTLE PRIEST

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But as long as he's got the boy with him, he can't cause too much trouble.
Begging your pardon, sir, but what about Dr. Muñoz?
You're joking, surely.
I'm the only hope he has of obtaining his obsession.
He may chafe a bit, but I assure you, the doctor will toe the line.
He's not like us, is he? He doesn't see the big picture, does he? A better world...
Of course not. He's mad as a hatter.
You, however, have earned the next step in your spiritual development.
A better world, Kreskin.
One without Jews and niggers and chinks and wops and mental defectives.
F'hallá chutu ny'gharrahn.
(I'll tell you this,---)
(--- whoever said 'every day above ground is a good day' knew his onions.)
(We get out of this, I'm never even going down in the root cel...ar again.)
Ah, Miss Mercy, you made it!
And Mr Battler a pleasure to meet you at last

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THE LAY-IN IS CRUCIAL TO THE STRUCTURE OF A PICTURE. I LIKE TO SOLVE MY COMPOSITIONAL AND LIGHTING ISSUES UP FRONT RATHER THAN LATER.
WHEW! SMELLS LIKE A BAIT HOUSE IN HERE—

AREN'T YOU WORRIED ABOUT HIM TAKING A POWDER JUST LEAVING HIM HERE LIKE THAT?
NO. A NICE OLD NEW ENGLAND TRADITION: ORLOK KNOTS.

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NOW, THEN. DID YOU LOCATE—??
--AHH! EXCELLENT!
NOT SO FAST, PICKMAN--
RICHARD, PLEASE...
--PICKMAN WILL DO JUST FINE.
UNTIL I GET SOME CLEARER IDEA OF JUST WHERE YOU FIT INTO ALL THIS, I'LL TAKE MY PAYMENT UP FRONT
I'M AN ARTIST, MAN. I CAN'T HELP BUT BE A SELF-SERVING, INCONSISTENT, NARCISSISTIC BASTARD
STILL, YOU DO DESERVE SOME ANSWERS.
AFTER ALL, YOUR ENTIRE LIFE HAS BEEN BOUND UP IN THESE EVENTS.
THIS SEEMS AS GOOD A PLACE TO START AS ANY
VERY PRESCIENT OF YOU TO TAKE PICTURES OF THE PLATES BEFORE THEY DISAPPEARED. NOT THAT THEY WILL DO YOU MUCH GOOD
THE ACTUAL PLATES HAD A ONE-TO-ONE CORRESPONDENCE TO THE ORIGINAL CARVINGS.
AND THEREIN LIES THEIR SECRET

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You'll note that some of the lines are worn away but others were etched much deeper, to avoid erosion.
There are three aspects to the code: the length of each line, its ratio to the lines on either side, and the angles created at the joins.
The last two can be measured, of course, but the key is the length, which is very precise.
And to what purpose?
There you have me.
Old Degroot dabbled in all the arcane arts.
It could be anything from alchemy or astral projection to quantum mechanics.
I'd hardly equate superstitions with science.
You need to broaden your view my dear.
Magic, music, mathematics, language itself. They're just different ways of shaping information.
Perhaps their purposes are not even all that different.
You'll have to do better than that. I read Degroot's text and it was all gibberish. Are you lying again or do you have a code key?
Neither Angus Degroot is a distant cousin of mine.
I asked him.
You've a very long-lived family.
The book was written in the 1830s.

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I'M TEASING, OF COURSE.
I MEANT TO SAY, ASKED MY GREAT AUNT THE DE GROOT LINEAGE WAS ABSORBED INTO THE MARTENSE FAMILY, RELATED TO ME VIA MY MOTHER.
LET'S START WITH THESE MAPS.
VERY RUSHED. CERTAINLY NOT WORK I'M PROUD OF, BUT I CAN AT LEAST VOUCH FOR THEIR ACCURACY
AND THEIR INTEREST
WE'RE HERE, IN PROVIDENCE, DIRECTLY BENEATH FEDERAL HILL. WALK DOWN THE EAST TUNNEL ABOUT THIRTY YARDS—
— AND COME OUT HERE SOME SIXTY MILES TO THE NORTHEAST, BENEATH COPP'S HILL CEMETARY IN BOSTON.
AS BEST I CAN TELL THE ANOMALY IS PREHISTORIC IN ORIGIN. IT'S MENTIONED IN SEVERAL OBSCURE NATIVE MYTHS AS THE DEVIL'S GATE.
HOWEVER. WHAT REALLY CONCERNS YOU IS HERE, BENEATH SOUTH STATION.
A BLANK SPACE?
AN UNKNOWN SPACE. OR PERHAPS MORE ACCURATELY, AN UNDEFINED SPACE.
AS IF THE CREATION OF THE WORLD CONCLUDED WITHOUT QUITE FINISHING THIS SPOT
THE ONLY WAY WE REALLY KNOW IT'S THERE IS THAT IT EXPANDS AND CONTRACTS SLIGHTLY.
WHAT, LIKE... BREATHING?
ACTUALLY, YES. THE GREAT LUNG OF THE WORLD.
WARREN THINKS IT MOVES RELATIVE TO ONE OR MORE PLANETARY ORBITS, BUT—
BUT WHAT YOU'RE SAYING IS, ALL YOU HAVE TO OFFER IS A CODE WE CAN'T DECIPHER AND A SPACE WE CAN'T ACCESS.
IF YOU WANT THE GOODS, YOU'LL HAVE TO BETTER THAN THAT
YOU FAIL TO APPRECIATE MY SENSE OF DRAMA, NAN.
SURELY YOU KNOW I WOULD SAVE THE BEST FOR LAST
THIS PHOTOGRAPH. PLATE SEVEN—
IT MIGHT LOOK MORE FAMILIAR IF WE TURN IT UPSIDE-DOWN.

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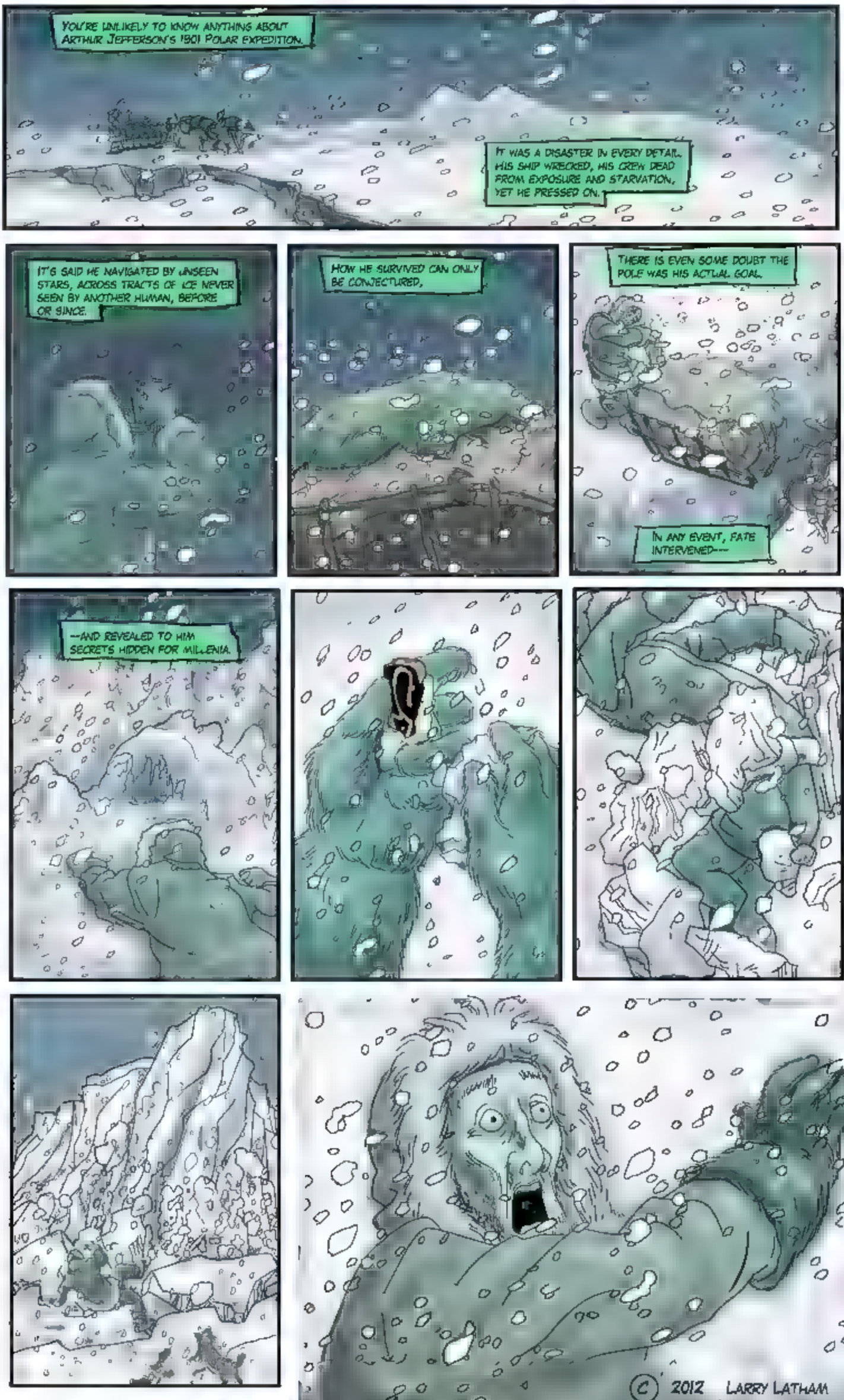
YOU'RE UNLIKELY TO KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT ARTHUR JEFFERSON'S 1901 POLAR EXPEDITION.
IT WAS A DISASTER IN EVERY DETAIL. HIS SHIP WRECKED, HIS CREW DEAD FROM EXPOSURE AND STARVATION, YET HE PRESSED ON.
IT'S SAID HE NAVIGATED BY UNSEEN STARS, ACROSS TRACTS OF ICE NEVER SEEN BY ANOTHER HUMAN, BEFORE OR SINCE.
HOW HE SURVIVED CAN ONLY BE CONJECTURED,
THERE IS EVEN SOME DOUBT THE POLE WAS HIS ACTUAL GOAL.
IN ANY EVENT, FATE INTERVENED---
--AND REVEALED TO HIM SECRETS HIDDEN FOR MILLENIA.
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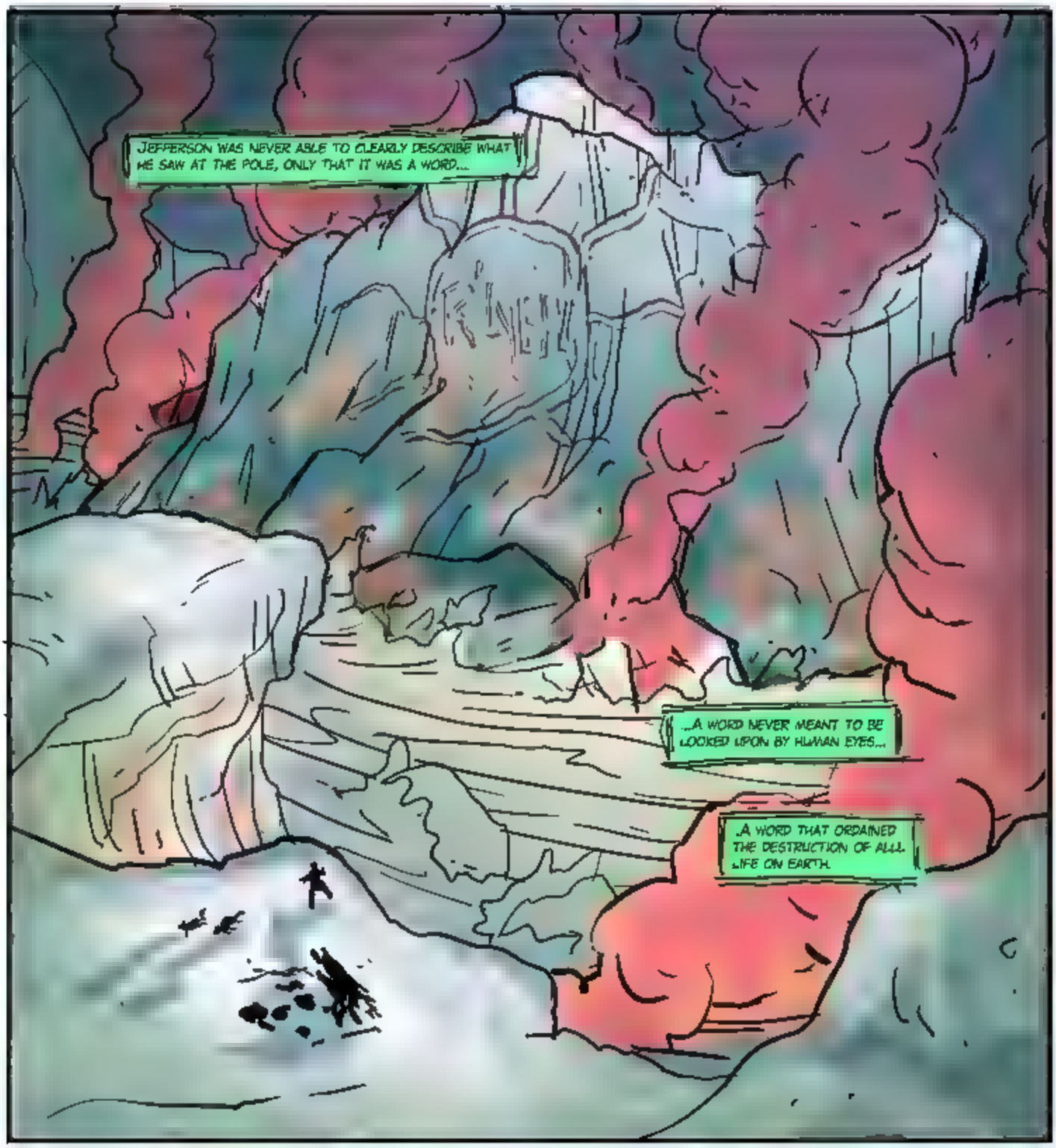
JEFFERSON WAS NEVER ABLE TO CLEARLY DESCRIBE WHAT HE SAW AT THE POLE, ONLY THAT IT WAS A WORD...
...A WORD NEVER MEANT TO BE LOOKED UPON BY HUMAN EYES...
...A WORD THAT ORDAINED THE DESTRUCTION OF ALL LIFE ON EARTH.

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ALL HE RETAINED FROM HIS JOURNEY WAS THE ARTIFACT. HE DEVOTED THE REST OF HIS LIFE TO DISCOVERING ITS ORIGIN.

IT EVENTUALLY FOUND ITS WAY INTO THE POSSESSION OF OUR MUTUAL ACQUAINTANCE, PROFESSOR HARLEY WARREN AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA.

IT BECAME HIS OBSESSION AND HE EXPERIMENTED ON IT ENDLESSLY

POOR HARLEY. ALL HE WAS EVER ABLE TO PROVE IS THAT WHEN CERTAIN KINDS OF ENERGY REACH A CERTAIN LEVEL

--THE PENDANT DISPERSES IT

YES. A FORM OF SELF-PRESERVATION.

YOU SEE, HE CAME TO BELIEVE IT----THAT IT IS ACTUALLY AN ORGANISM, AN ALIEN ENTITY

AND ER, QUITE LIKELY PARASITIC IN NATURE.

VERY COLORFUL.

TOO BAD I'M SO FAMILIAR WITH YOUR PENCHANT FOR LYING ---

! HAV---HCKHCK ! HCK GARRRGGG!

WHAT THE HECK?

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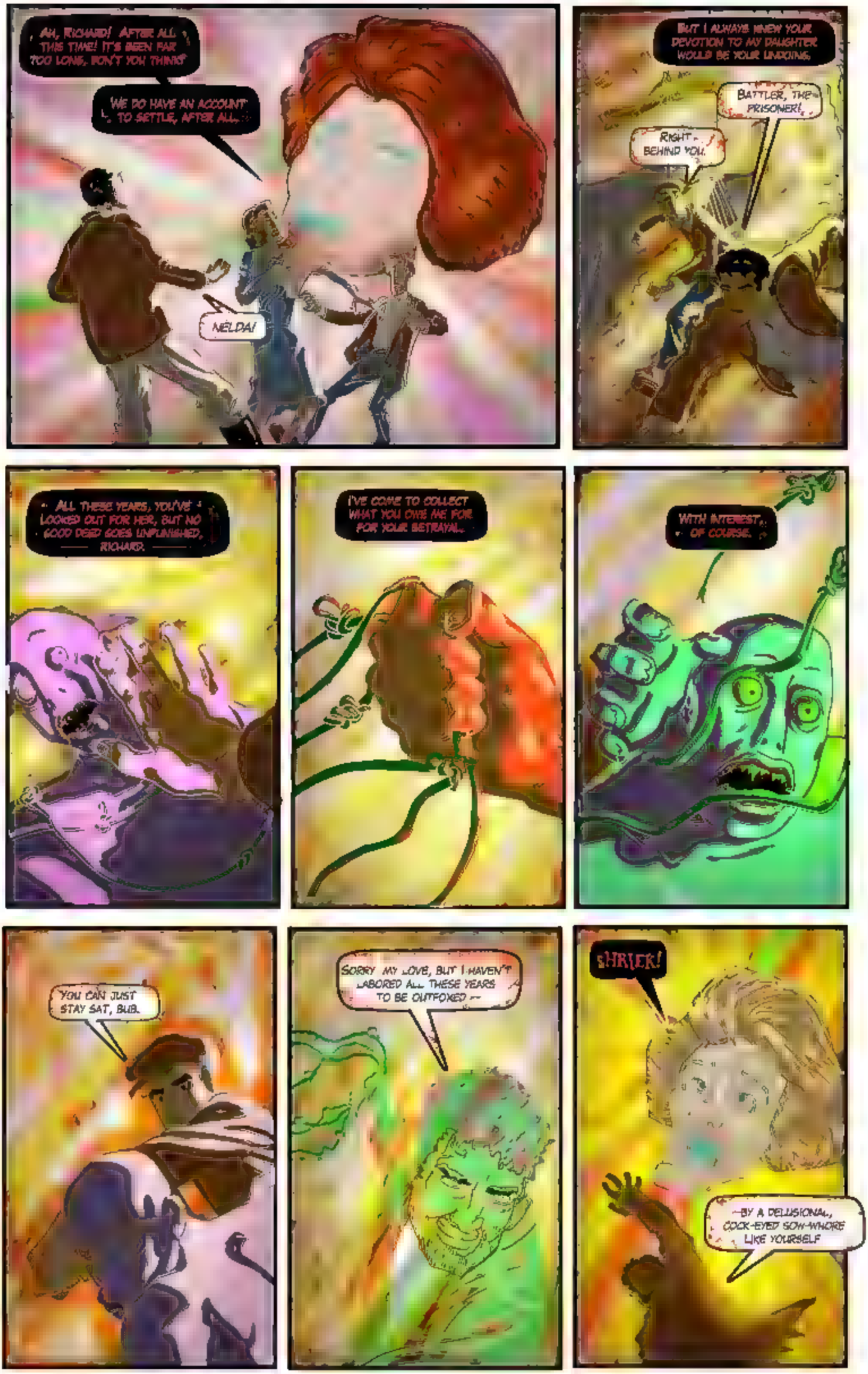
AH, RICHARD! AFTER ALL THIS TIME! IT'S BEEN FAR TOO LONG, DON'T YOU THINK?
WE DO HAVE AN ACCOUNT TO SETTLE, AFTER ALL...
NELDA!
BUT I ALWAYS KNEW YOUR DEVOTION TO MY DAUGHTER WOULD BE YOUR UNDOING.
BATTLER, THE PRISONER!
RIGHT BEHIND YOU.
ALL THESE YEARS, YOU'VE LOOKED OUT FOR HER, BUT NO GOOD DEED GOES UNPUNISHED, RICHARD.
I'VE COME TO COLLECT WHAT YOU OWE ME FOR FOR YOUR BETRAYAL.
WITH INTEREST, OF COURSE.
YOU CAN JUST STAY SAT, BUB.
SORRY MY LOVE, BUT I HAVEN'T LABORED ALL THESE YEARS TO BE OUTFOXED --
SHRIEK!
--BY A DELUSIONAL, COCK-EYED SON-WHORE LIKE YOURSELF

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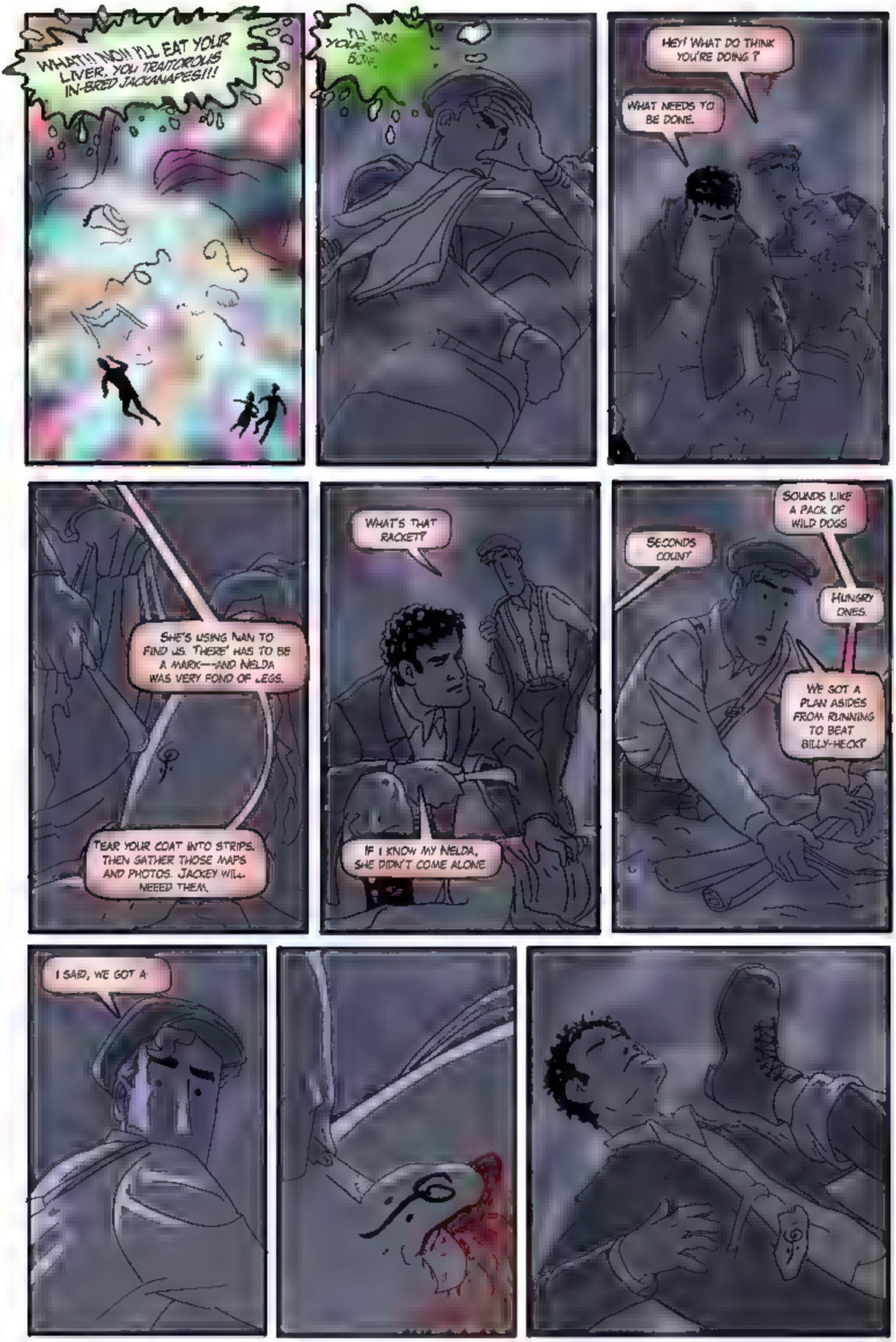
WHAT!!! NO!! I'LL EAT YOUR LIVER, YOU TRAITOROUS IN-BRED JACKANAPES!!!
I'LL PISS YOUR SOUL OUT!
HEY! WHAT DO THINK YOU'RE DOING?
WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE.
SHE'S USING NAN TO FIND US. THERE' HAS TO BE A MARK—AND NELDA WAS VERY FOND OF LEGS.
TEAR YOUR COAT INTO STRIPS. THEN GATHER THOSE MAPS AND PHOTOS. JACKEY WILL NEEED THEM.
WHAT'S THAT RACKET?
IF I KNOW MY NELDA, SHE DIDN'T COME ALONE
SOUNDS LIKE A PACK OF WILD DOGS
SECONDS COUNT
HUNGRY ONES.
WE GOT A PLAN ASIDES FROM RUNNING TO BEAT BILLY-HECK?
I SAID, WE GOT A

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YOU'RE OUT OF YOUR COTTON-PICKIN' MIND, PICKMAN.
FROM YOUR PERSPECTIVE, THAT'S LIKELY TRUE.
BUT THAT LITTLE SURSERY WILL KEEP NELDA FROM TRACKING US.
DON'T GET SMART, MISTER. I'M JUST ITCHING TO 'PERSPECTIVE' YOUR HEAD INTO A MASON JAR.
IT SOUNDED TO ME LIKE YOU WERE THE ONE THE LADY WAS LOOKING FOR.
BUT WE CAN WORK THAT AFTER WE GET OUT OF THE WAY OF WHATEVER'S COMING THROUGH THE TUNNELS--
YOU TWO TAKE THE LEFT CORRIDOR
ULTIMATELY, WE'RE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER.
BUT THIS PARTICULAR MATTER IS A FAMILY AFFAIR.
FIRST, HOWEVER, I HAVE A PAINTING TO FINISH.
I'M OBSESSIVE THAT WAY.
I SUPPOSE MOST ARTISTS ARE.
AND I'VE HAD THIS IDEA FOR SUCH A LONG, LONG TIME...

I'D HURRY NOW IF I WERE YOU.
DON'T NEED TO TELL ME TWICE
CAN YOU WALK ON YOUR OWN?
I--I THINK--I'LL HAVE TO...
AH, HOWARD, BLESS YOUR SOUL.
YOU KEPT YOUR WORD
NOW, I'LL KEEP MINE.
Weird Tales
MAGAZINE of the
WEIRD and UNUSUAL
YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHERE WE'RE GOING?
N-NO.
WHAT IN TARNATION NOW?
PAUPER'S VAULT. ONLY THE WEALTHY GET CEMETARIES.

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HOLY--
---CROW!!
KNOCKING ME DOWN, THAT'S THE EASY PART--
KEEPING ME DOWN--
THAT'S SOMETHING ELSE AGAIN.
AND ON TOP O' THAT---
---I HAVE PLUMB HAD MY FILL OF YOU SQUIRMY SONS-A-SHEEPHERDERS.
WIN! MORE!
GRAB A ROCK, SISTER. LET'S GIVE 'EM A FIGHT THEY'LL REMEMBER.

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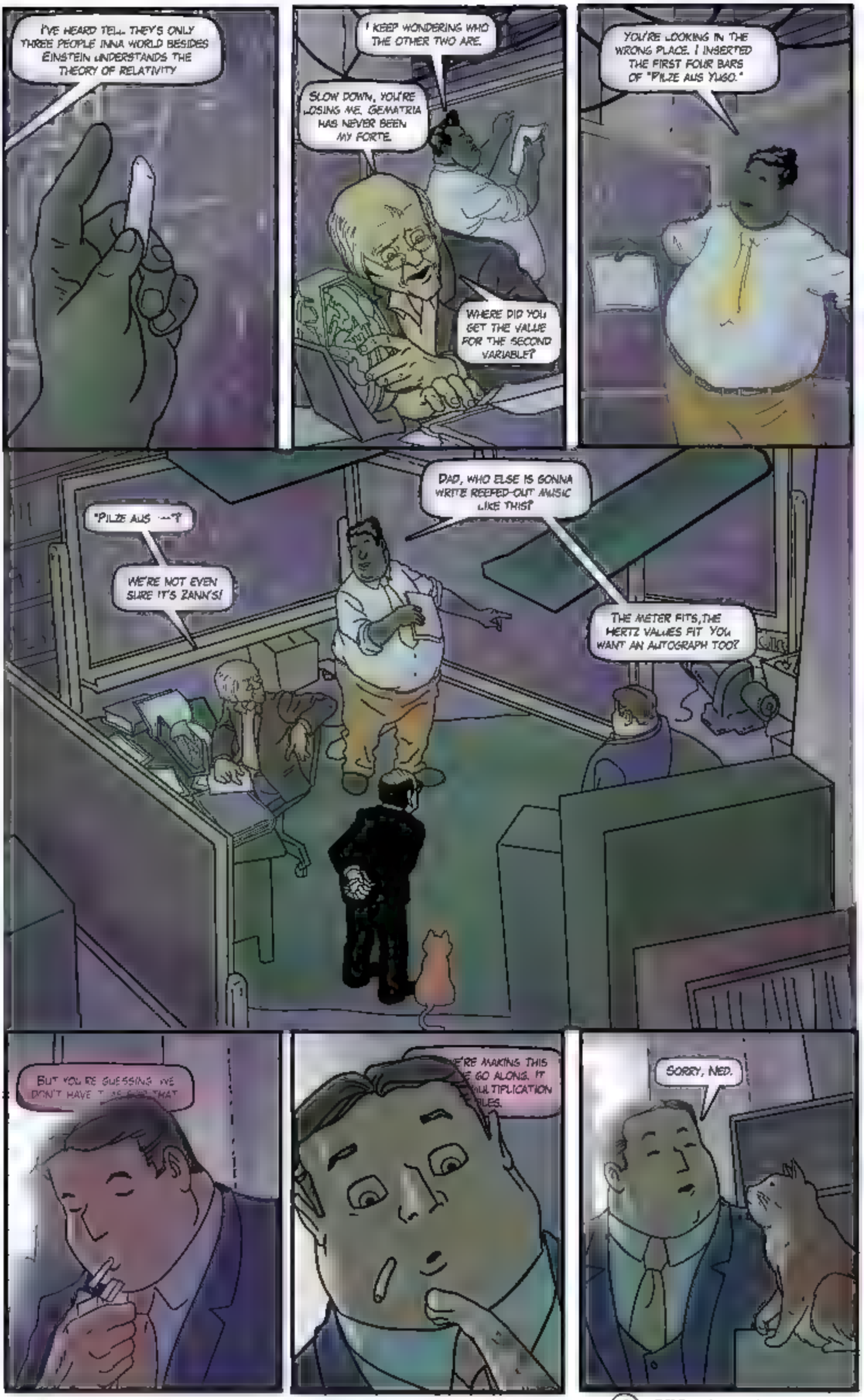
I'VE HEARD TELL THEY'S ONLY THREE PEOPLE INNA WORLD BESIDES EINSTEIN UNDERSTANDS THE THEORY OF RELATIVITY
I KEEP WONDERING WHO THE OTHER TWO ARE.
SLOW DOWN, YOU'RE LOSING ME. GEMATRIA HAS NEVER BEEN MY FORTE.
WHERE DID YOU GET THE VALUE FOR THE SECOND VARIABLE?
YOU'RE LOOKING IN THE WRONG PLACE. I INSERTED THE FIRST FOUR BARS OF "PILZE AUS YUGO."
DAD, WHO ELSE IS GONNA WRITE BEEPED-OUT MUSIC LIKE THIS?
"PILZE AUS ---"?
WE'RE NOT EVEN SURE IT'S ZANN'S!
THE METER FITS, THE HERTZ VALUES FIT. YOU WANT AN AUTOGRAPH TOO?
BUT YOU'RE GUESSING. WE DON'T HAVE T
E'RE MAKING THIS E GO ALONG. IT ULTIPLICATION LES.
SORRY, NED.

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HALLO! ANYBODY TO HOME ?
OVER HERE, INSPECTOR.
I TRUST YOUR TRIP WAS SUCCESSFUL.
AFTER A MANNER OF SPEAKING.
I FOUND YOUR MAN WILCOX ALL RIGHT
YOU'LL HAVE TO DO THE INTERROGATING, THOUGH. I DON'T HAVE NO EXPERIENCE WITH BUCKETS O' MUCK.
HMMPH. YOU'VE GOT THE JIG WORKING. THINGS MUST BE GETTING SERIOUS.
ALL WE HAVE AT THE MOMENT IS MISH-MASH. LUTHER'S TRYING TO PULL IT ALL TOGETHER. I BELIEVE WE ARE MAKING PROGRESS.
GOOD. I'M READY TO PUT AN END TO THIS DAMN BLOODY NONSENSE.
FOR MY OWN SANITY AS MUCH AS ANYTHING ELSE.
BUT TELL ME AGAIN HOW CHASING AFTER PEOPLE THAT DON'T EXIST IS WORKING IN OUR FAVOR ?
THEY DON'T EXIST NOW, INSPECTOR. THE QUESTION IS—
—HAS THAT ALWAYS BEEN THE CASE ?

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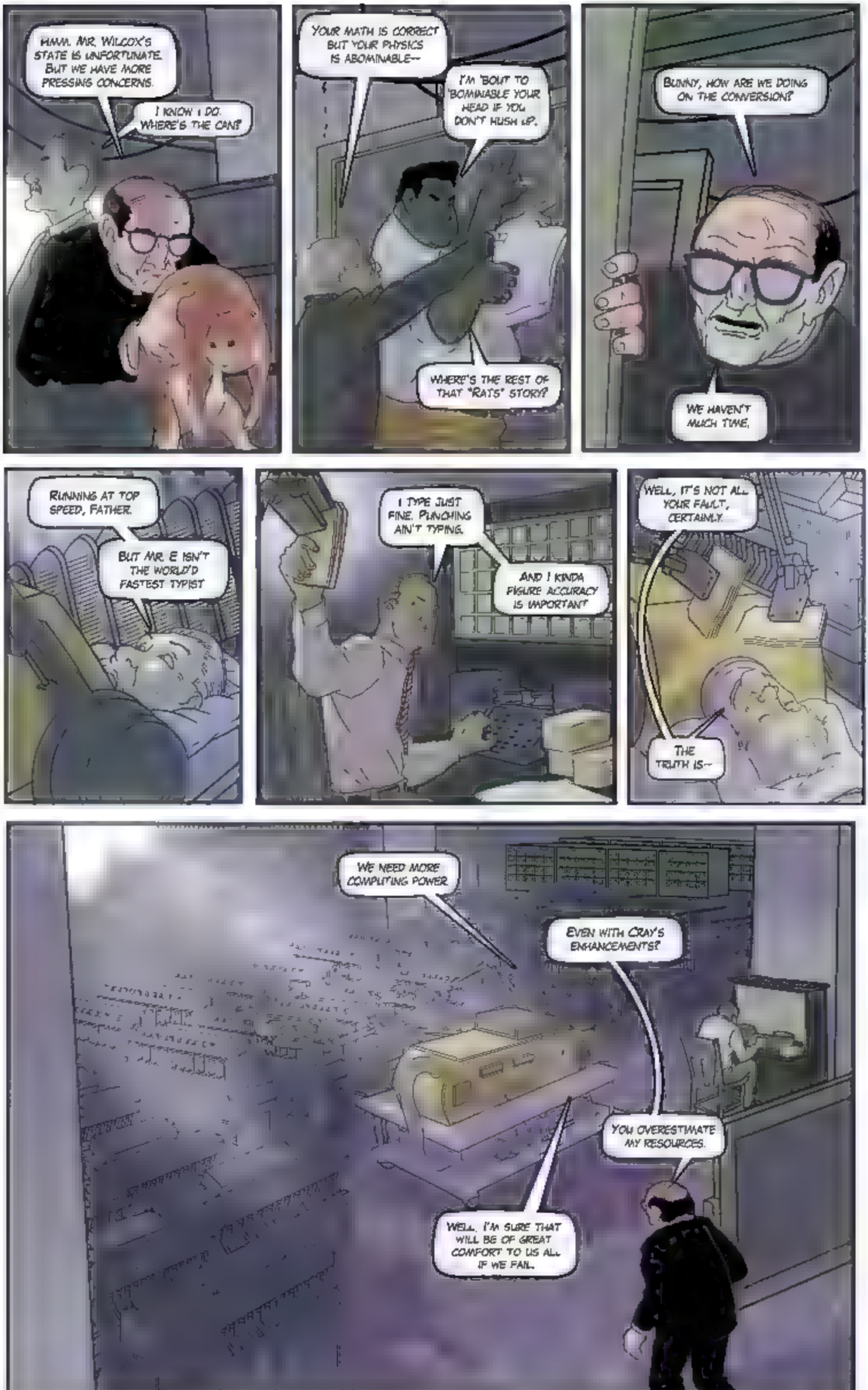
HMM. MR. WILCOX'S STATE IS UNFORTUNATE. BUT WE HAVE MORE PRESSING CONCERNS.
I KNOW I DO. WHERE'S THE CAN?
YOUR MATH IS CORRECT BUT YOUR PHYSICS IS ABOMINABLE--
I'M 'BOUT TO 'BOMINABLE YOUR HEAD IF YOU DON'T HUSH UP.
WHERE'S THE REST OF THAT "RATS" STORY?
BUNNY, HOW ARE WE DOING ON THE CONVERSION?
WE HAVEN'T MUCH TIME.
RUNNING AT TOP SPEED, FATHER.
BUT MR. E ISN'T THE WORLD'D FASTEST TYPIST
I TYPE JUST FINE. PUNCHING AIN'T TYPING.
AND I KINDA FIGURE ACCURACY IS IMPORTANT
WELL, IT'S NOT ALL YOUR FAULT, CERTAINLY.
THE TRUTH IS--
WE NEED MORE COMPUTING POWER
EVEN WITH CRAY'S ENHANCEMENTS?
YOU OVERESTIMATE MY RESOURCES.
WELL, I'M SURE THAT WILL BE OF GREAT COMFORT TO US ALL IF WE FAIL.

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FAILURE, UNFORTUNATELY, IS ALWAYS A POSSIBILITY I DON'T CARE TO WASTE WHAT TIME WE HAVE TO CONSIDER IT
AW, NOW THAT DON'T MAKE NO KINDA SENSE...
WAIT A MINUTE. YES IT DOES.
I WAS FLAT OUT WRONG.
I THOUGHT I'D MADE A MISTAKE WHEN I HADN'T
JUST LEFT OUT A LITTLE PATIENCE
SEE?
OK, NOW THIS GETTING GOL-DANGED RIDICULOUS.
IT REALLY—
—!ZZZZ
HEAVENS! YOUR LEG!
WALTER, GET THE FIRST AID KIT AND FIND MISS MERCY SOMETHING DECENT TO WEAR
LIKE SANTA CLAUS..
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
SURE,,M-MM—WHICH WAY IS...UP ...??

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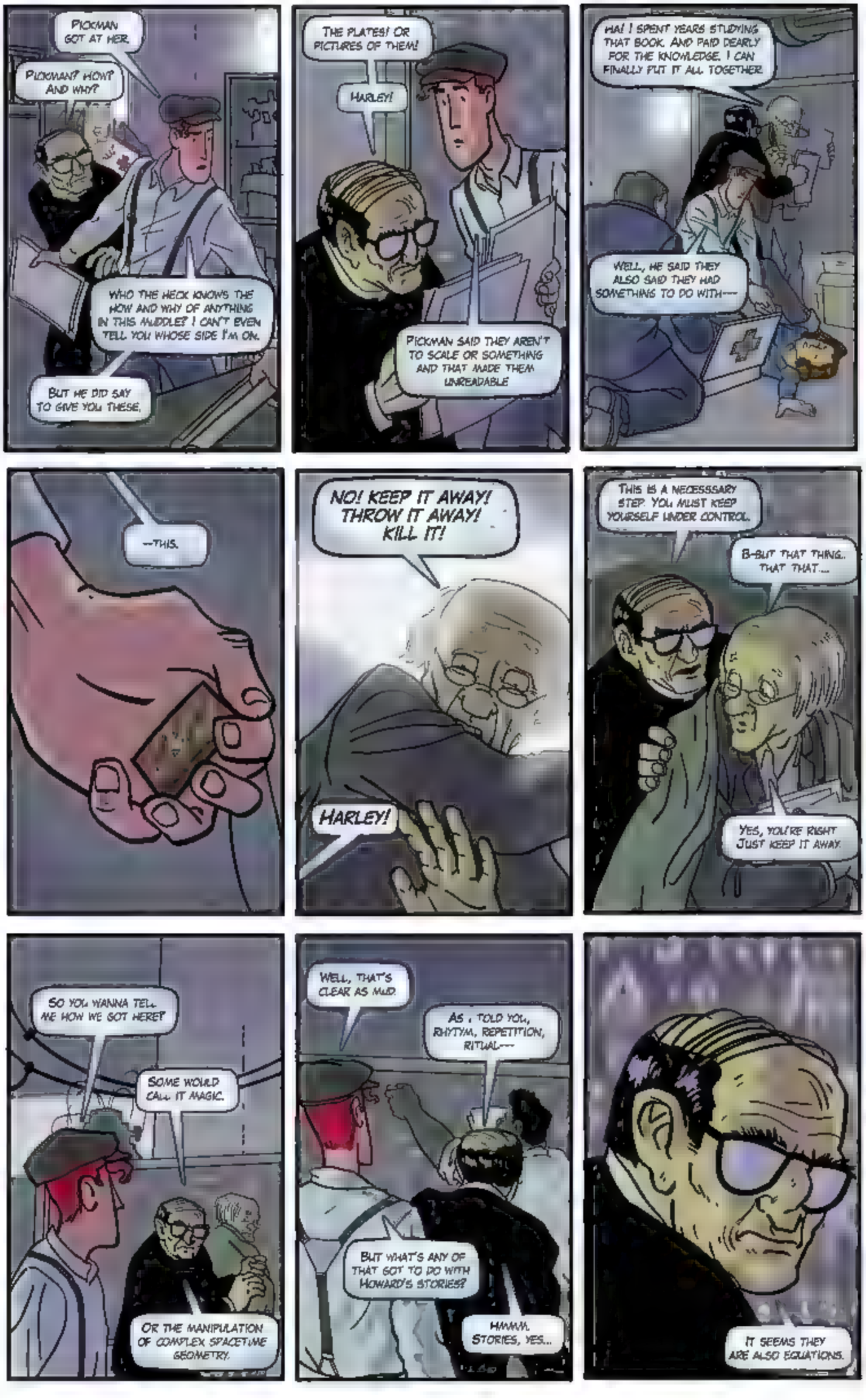
PICKMAN GOT AT HER.
PICKMAN? HOW? AND WHY?
WHO THE HECK KNOWS THE HOW AND WHY OF ANYTHING IN THIS MUDDLE? I CAN'T EVEN TELL YOU WHOSE SIDE I'M ON.
BUT HE DID SAY TO GIVE YOU THESE.
THE PLATES! OR PICTURES OF THEM!
HARLEY!
PICKMAN SAID THEY AREN'T TO SCALE OR SOMETHING AND THAT MADE THEM UNREADABLE
HA! I SPENT YEARS STUDYING THAT BOOK. AND PAID DEARLY FOR THE KNOWLEDGE. I CAN FINALLY PUT IT ALL TOGETHER.
WELL, HE SAID THEY ALSO SAID THEY HAD SOMETHING TO DO WITH---
--THIS.
NO! KEEP IT AWAY! THROW IT AWAY! KILL IT!
HARLEY!
THIS IS A NECESSSARY STEP. YOU MUST KEEP YOURSELF UNDER CONTROL.
B-BUT THAT THING.. THAT THAT...
YES, YOU'RE RIGHT JUST KEEP IT AWAY.
SO YOU WANNA TELL ME HOW WE GOT HERE?
SOME WOULD CALL IT MAGIC.
OR THE MANIPULATION OF COMPLEX SPACETIME GEOMETRY.
WELL, THAT'S CLEAR AS MUD.
AS I TOLD YOU, RHYTYM, REPETITION, RITUAL---
BUT WHAT'S ANY OF THAT GOT TO DO WITH HOWARD'S STORIES?
HMMM. STORIES, YES...
IT SEEMS THEY ARE ALSO EQUATIONS.

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DO YOU KNOW, KRESKIN, I REMEMER MY VERY FIRST MOMENT OF CONSCIOUNESS?

NOT FULLY FORMED, OF COURSE. DID NOT KNOW WHO, OR WHAT I WAS—

—ONLY THAT I WAS

AND THAT MY HOST WAS A MOHAMMEDAN APOSTATE AND ALCHEMIST..

A

..WHO WENT BY THE NAME OF ABDU AL-HAZRD.

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HIS PASSION--HIS OBSESSION--
WAS TO COMPILE ALL THE ANCIENT,
FORBIDDEN LORE, FROM HERMES
TRISMEGITSTUS TO THE SECRETS OF
THE DESERT DJINN INTO A SINGLE
VOLUME

HE SOUGHT OUT MOULDERING
PALIMPSETS IN ABANDONED
AND SHUNNED TEMPLES
DEDICATED TO FORGOTTEN GODS.

HE LISTENED TO THE SECRETS OF
THE WIND AS IT HOWLED THROUGH THE
RUINS OF ANCIENT CITIES. AND
DECIPHERED THE SONGS OF
INSECTS IN THE NIGHT.

HE CONSULTED OBSCENE RELICS
OF DEGENERATE RACES...

AND OFTEN, THE LAST
LIVING DESCENDANTS OF
THOSE RACES.

AND WHEN HE COULD
NOT FIND WHAT HE
NEEDED IN THIS WORLD...

--HE SOUGHT
IT ELSEWHERE

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TO HIS CREDIT HE DID NOT LET MY PRESENCE DETER HIM FROM HIS CHOSEN TASK,
HE WENT ABOUT HIS BUSINESS AS IF I DIDN'T EVEN EXIST---
--WITHOUT EVER CONSIDERING THAT THE DAY WOULD COME-
--WHEN I MIGHT WISH TO STRIKE OUT ON MY OWN.

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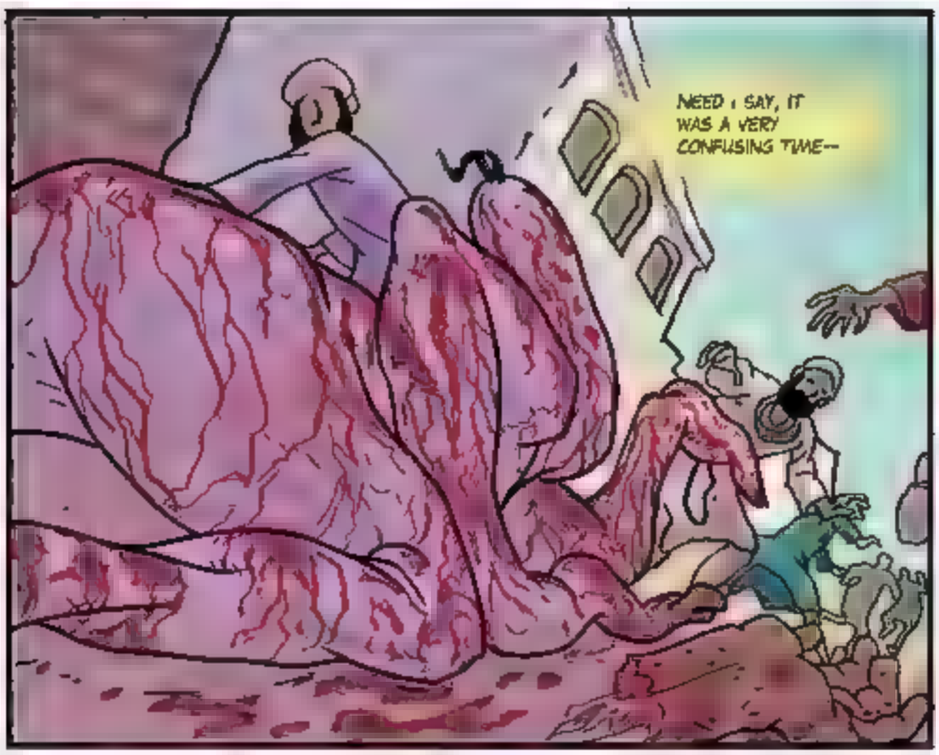

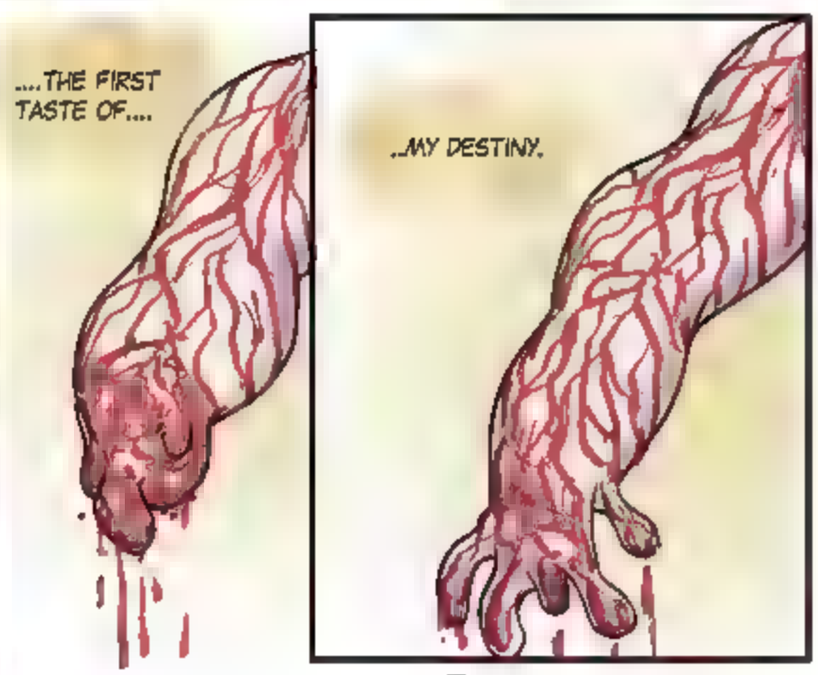

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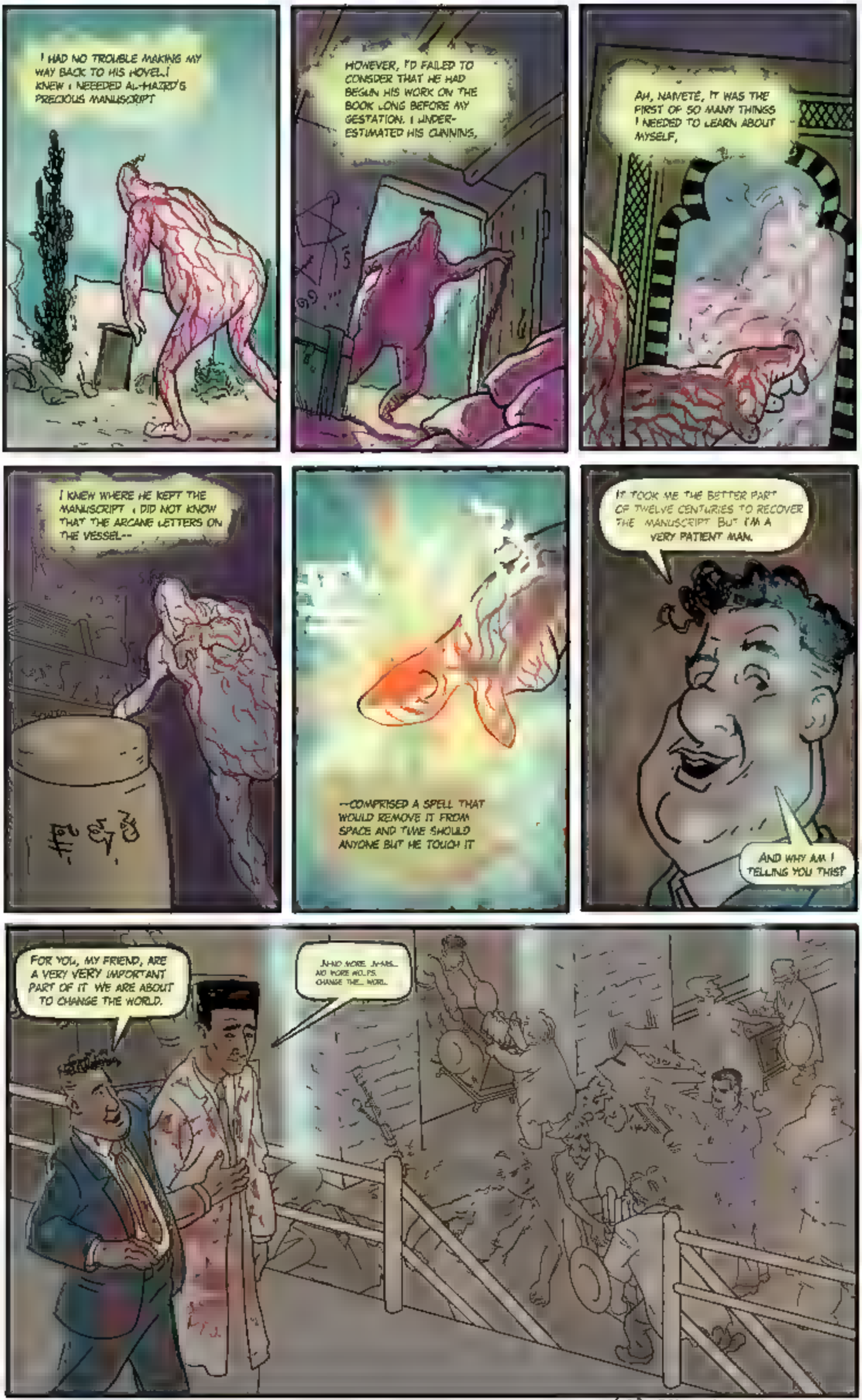
I HAD NO TROUBLE MAKING MY WAY BACK TO HIS HOVEL. I KNEW I NEEDED AL-HAZRED'S PRECIOUS MANUSCRIPT
HOWEVER, I'D FAILED TO CONSIDER THAT HE HAD BEGUN HIS WORK ON THE BOOK LONG BEFORE MY GESTATION. I UNDER-ESTIMATED HIS CUNNING,
AH, NAIVETÉ, IT WAS THE FIRST OF SO MANY THINGS I NEEDED TO LEARN ABOUT MYSELF,
I KNEW WHERE HE KEPT THE MANUSCRIPT. I DID NOT KNOW THAT THE ARCANE LETTERS ON THE VESSEL--
--COMPRISED A SPELL THAT WOULD REMOVE IT FROM SPACE AND TIME SHOULD ANYONE BUT HE TOUCH IT
IT TOOK ME THE BETTER PART OF TWELVE CENTURIES TO RECOVER THE MANUSCRIPT. BUT I'M A VERY PATIENT MAN.
AND WHY AM I TELLING YOU THIS?
FOR YOU, MY FRIEND, ARE A VERY VERY IMPORTANT PART OF IT. WE ARE ABOUT TO CHANGE THE WORLD.
N-NO MORE J-JARS... NO MORE W-L.PS. CHANGE THE... WORL.

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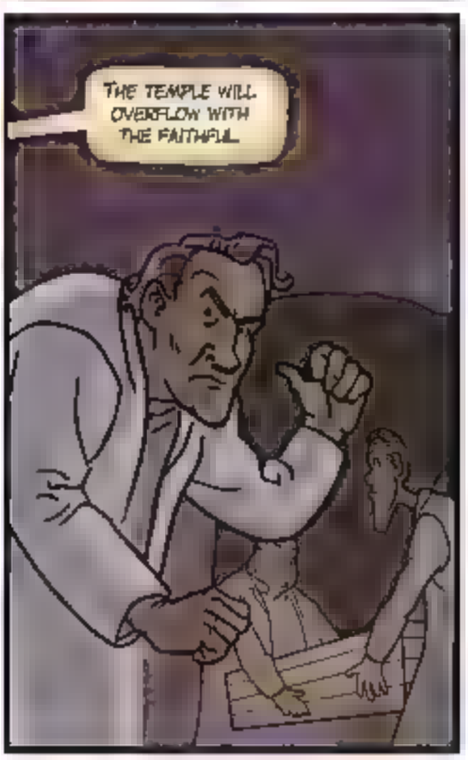
Mi amigos!
The day, it has arrived, yes?
We are even ahead of our schedule! All the machines will be in place before the sun has set

I have every confidence in your technology Doctor. The arrival of the guests is my greatest concern.
The coordinates have been transmitted and all have confirmed their receipt
Even as we speak, preparations are being made for their arrival.



The great work will be consumated at last!
Yes, yes. The world will be reborn, Truth will triumph, and so on, just as we've dreamed all these years.

Ah, now we get to it! Your just reward....immortality A reward well-earned, I might add. And you shall have it!
But first we have that little trap to set, yes?

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PROGRESS?
YOU CALL THIS PROGRESS?!
IF MUÑOZ BETRAYS US, AND I'M CERTAIN HE WILL, WE WILL HAVE NO ACCESS TO THE CHAMBER.
YEARS OF PLANNING--STUDY--SACRIFICE!--ARE ON THE VERGE OF BEING THWARTED BY YOUR BUNGLING!
THERE ARE ONLY TWO WAYS INTO THE SANCTUARY
ALL YOUR FAWNING FAILED TO PRY THE FIRST OUT OF THE OLD MAN. IF WE CAN'T FIND THE SECOND ENTRANCE
--NOT EVEN LENG ITSELF WILL BE FAR AWAY ENOUGH TO HIDE US.
..I..I ALMOST HAVE IT, I'M CERTAIN.
YOU HAVE TWENTY FOUR HOURS UNTIL THE CEREMONY
BRING IT TO ME OR, SO HELP ME, I WILL FEED YOU TO NELDA.
FOR NOW WE WILL PROCEED AS PLANNED. YOU ACCOMPANY MUÑOZ TO THE SANCTUARY, I'LL HANDLE THINGS HERE.
OTHERWISE, BE HERE. I'LL BE MORE FREE TO STEP IN AND SIEZE CONTROL.
I DOUBT ANYONE THERE WILL SURVIVE. IT'S A SHAME, ALL THOSE SHEEP, READY TO BE LED...

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...BUT BETTER THEM THAN ME.

OH, AND YOU, OF COURSE.

YOU KNOW, I NEVER DID LIKE THAT OILY SPIC DOCTOR

SENOR BOWERS, YOU ARE READY?

SHORE AM AIN'T NOBODY OR NO THING GONNNA GET PAST MY BOY.

YOU KIN PUT 'AT IN THE BANK.

YES, THIS IS MISS ANN GAMWELL OF NUMBER 10 BENEFIT STREET IN PROVIDENCE. I'D LIKE TO ORDER A CAR FOR TOMORRROW EVENING. .

OH NO, I'LL TAKE THE TRAIN TO BOSTON..YOU MAY PICK ME UP AT SEVEN O'CLOCK SHARP AT SOUTH STATION.

PLEASE BE ON TIME IF YOU EXPECT A GRATUITY.

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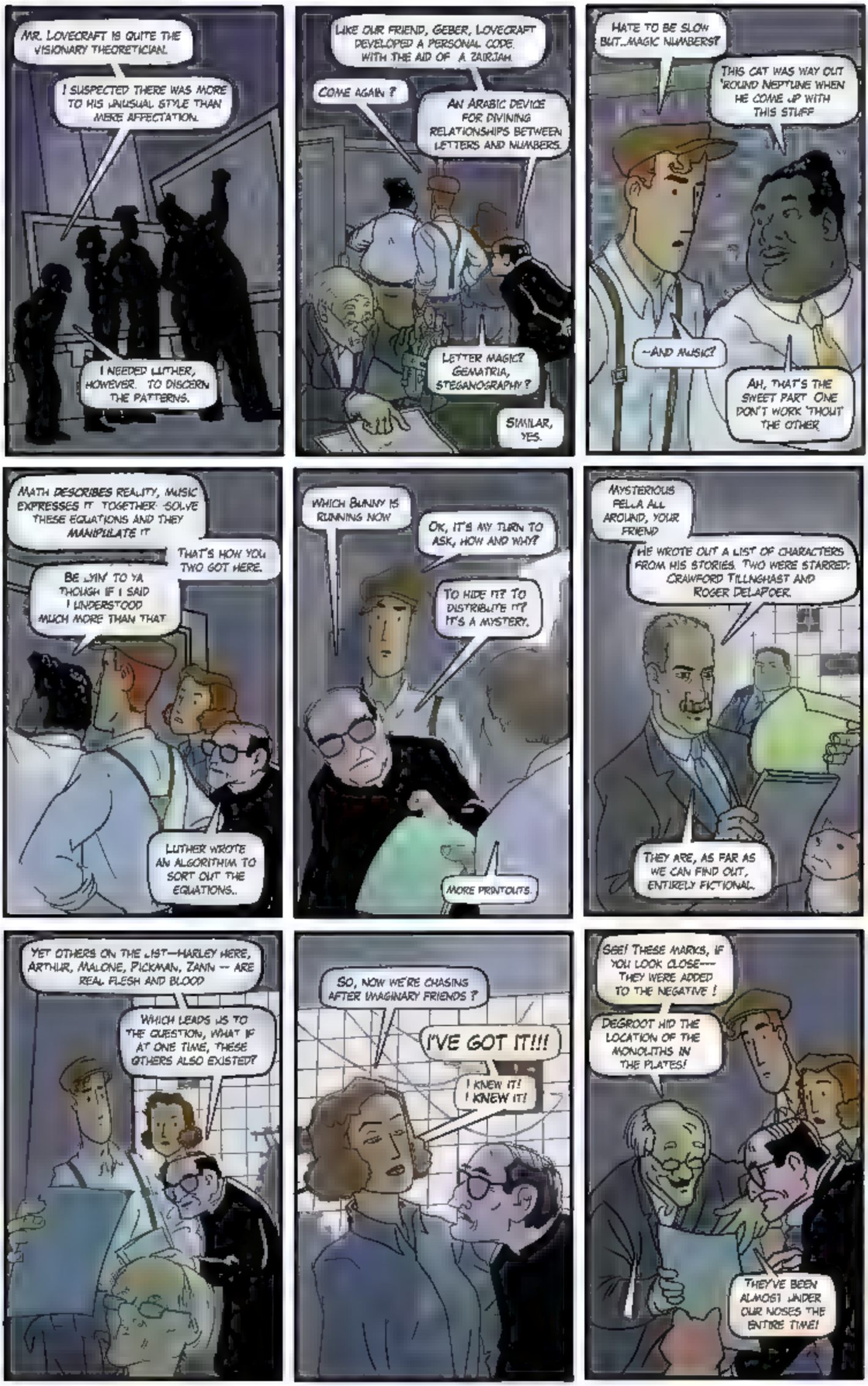
MR. LOVECRAFT IS QUITE THE VISIONARY THEORETICIAN.
I SUSPECTED THERE WAS MORE TO HIS UNUSUAL STYLE THAN MERE AFFECTATION.
I NEEDED LUTHER, HOWEVER. TO DISCERN THE PATTERNS.
LIKE OUR FRIEND, GEBER, LOVECRAFT DEVELOPED A PERSONAL CODE. WITH THE AID OF A ZAIRJAH.
COME AGAIN ?
AN ARABIC DEVICE FOR DIVINING RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN LETTERS AND NUMBERS.
LETTER MAGIC? GEMATRIA, STEGANOGRAPHY ?
SIMILAR, YES.
HATE TO BE SLOW BUT...MAGIC NUMBERS?
THIS CAT WAS WAY OUT 'ROUND NEPTUNE WHEN HE COME UP WITH THIS STUFF
--AND MUSIC?
AH, THAT'S THE SWEET PART ONE DON'T WORK 'THOUT THE OTHER.
MATH DESCRIBES REALITY, MUSIC EXPRESSES IT. TOGETHER SOLVE THESE EQUATIONS AND THEY MANIPULATE IT
THAT'S HOW YOU TWO GOT HERE.
BE LYIN' TO YA THOUGH IF I SAID I UNDERSTOOD MUCH MORE THAN THAT
LUTHER WROTE AN ALGORITHM TO SORT OUT THE EQUATIONS..
WHICH BUNNY IS RUNNING NOW
OK, IT'S MY TURN TO ASK, HOW AND WHY?
TO HIDE IT? TO DISTRIBUTE IT? IT'S A MYSTERY.
MORE PRINTOUTS.
MYSTERIOUS FELA ALL AROUND, YOUR FRIEND
HE WROTE OUT A LIST OF CHARACTERS FROM HIS STORIES. TWO WERE STARRED: CRAWFORD TILLINGHAST AND ROGER DELAPOER.
THEY ARE, AS FAR AS WE CAN FIND OUT, ENTIRELY FICTIONAL.
YET OTHERS ON THE LIST—HARLEY HERE, ARTHUR, MALONE, PICKMAN, ZANN -- ARE REAL FLESH AND BLOOD
WHICH LEADS US TO THE QUESTION, WHAT IF AT ONE TIME, THESE OTHERS ALSO EXISTED?
SO, NOW WE'RE CHASING AFTER IMAGINARY FRIENDS ?
I'VE GOT IT!!!
I KNEW IT! I KNEW IT!
SEE! THESE MARKS, IF YOU LOOK CLOSE--- THEY WERE ADDED TO THE NEGATIVE !
DEGROOT HID THE LOCATION OF THE MONOLITHS IN THE PLATES!
THEY'VE BEEN ALMOST UNDER OUR NOSES THE ENTIRE TIME!

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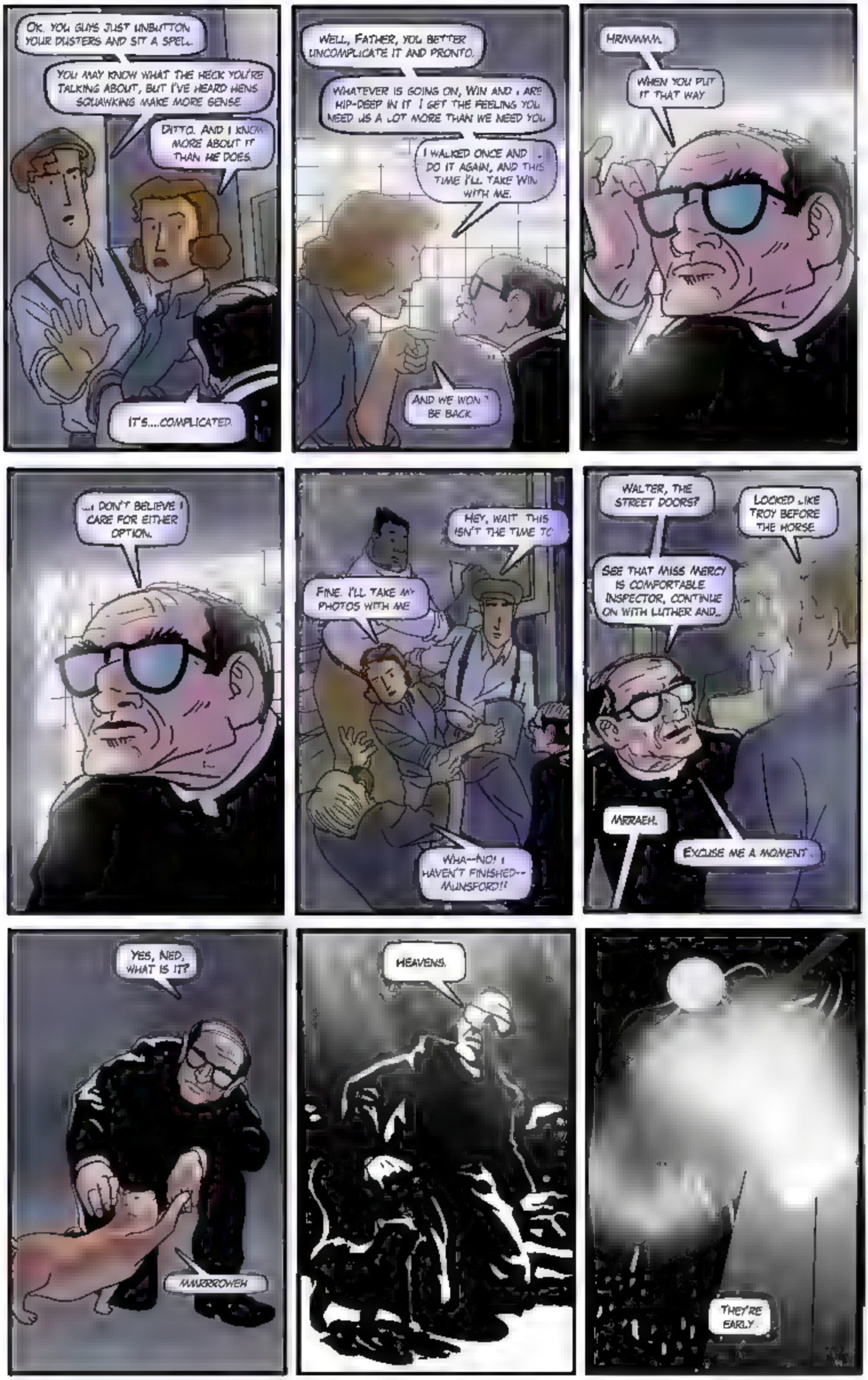
OK. YOU GUYS JUST UNBUTTON YOUR DUSTERS AND SIT A SPELL.
YOU MAY KNOW WHAT THE HECK YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT, BUT I'VE HEARD HENS SQUAWKING MAKE MORE SENSE.
DITTO. AND I KNOW MORE ABOUT IT THAN HE DOES.
IT'S....COMPLICATED.
WELL, FATHER, YOU BETTER UNCOMPLICATE IT AND PRONTO.
WHATEVER IS GOING ON, WIN AND I ARE HIP-DEEP IN IT. I GET THE FEELING YOU NEED US A LOT MORE THAN WE NEED YOU.
I WALKED ONCE AND I DO IT AGAIN, AND THIS TIME I'LL TAKE WIN WITH ME.
AND WE WON'T BE BACK.
HRMMMM.
WHEN YOU PUT IT THAT WAY
...I DON'T BELIEVE I CARE FOR EITHER OPTION.
HEY, WAIT. THIS ISN'T THE TIME TO
FINE. I'LL TAKE MY PHOTOS WITH ME
WHA--NO! I HAVEN'T FINISHED-- MUNSFORD!!
WALTER, THE STREET DOORS?
LOCKED LIKE TROY BEFORE THE HORSE.
SEE THAT MISS MERCY IS COMFORTABLE INSPECTOR, CONTINUE ON WITH LUTHER AND..
MARRAEH.
EXCUSE ME A MOMENT.
YES, NED, WHAT IS IT?
MMRROWEH
HEAVENS.
THEY'RE EARLY.

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WE STILL HAVE A FEW MINUTES,
WALTER, EELY— ROUTINE FIVE
ON IT
INSPECTOR, CHECK THE STREETS,
WHAT'S ROUTINE FIVE?
DOES IT MATTER? LET'S GET OUT OF HERE.
THIS ISN'T AN ELECTRICAL FAILURE, IS IT.
AFRAID NOT
MORE LIKE A FULL ON ASSAULT HERE COME THE CRAZIES.
TWO MORE OVER HERE
BUNNY! GET TO THE FLEA RUN.
THIS PASS IS ALMOST FINISHED
NOW!
WHILE THEY'RE STILL FORMING!
YOU KNEW THIS WAS GOING TO HAPPEN?
MANIPULATING SPACE AND TIME WAS BOUND TO ATTRACT ATTENTION.
I DID ASSUME THEY WOULD WAIT UNTIL WE'D FINISHED TRANSLATING THE GLYPHS
OK. WALTER... GOOD TO GO.
TRY TO KEEP EM OFF ME TILL I'M LOCKED IN.
NOT SO FAST, BUBBLES.

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"I WOULD AS YET HAVE A WORD WITH THEE, ERE THE CURTAINS—
—SHATTER!"
NINETY — SECONDS — TO — POWER — UP!
DON'T EXPECT THIS IS THE TIME TO BE ASKING WHAT THOSE THINGS ARE.
.BUT ONE OF 'EM'S USING THAT PILLAR FOR A SCRATCHING POST
THEY CAN'T HARM US YET
BUNNY, HAVE THE DRIVER TAKE YOU TO CRAY AND PELL'S AND STAY THERE WE'LL RENDEZVOUS SHORTLY
EVER THE OPTIMIST, MUNSFORD.
HOLY CROW! YOU DON'T CALL THIS HARM?
LOOKS LIKE MORE GOOD NEWS—
AT LAST, ALL MY LITTLE BUGS IN ONE PLACE.

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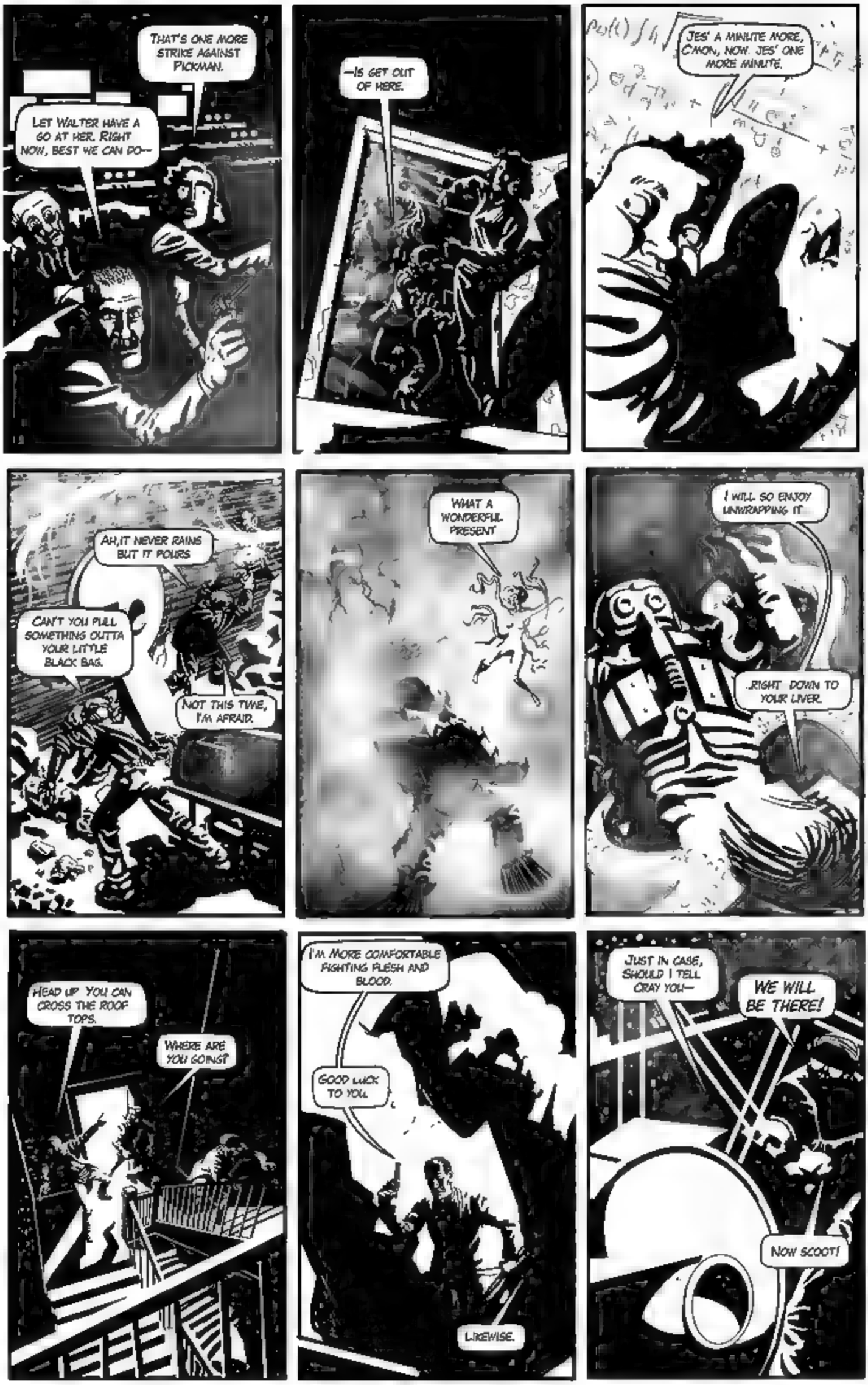
THAT'S ONE MORE STRIKE AGAINST PICKMAN.
LET WALTER HAVE A GO AT HER. RIGHT NOW, BEST WE CAN DO—
—IS GET OUT OF HERE.
JES' A MINUTE MORE, C'MON, NOW. JES' ONE MORE MINUTE.
AH, IT NEVER RAINS BUT IT POURS
CAN'T YOU PULL SOMETHING OUTTA YOUR LITTLE BLACK BAG.
NOT THIS TIME, I'M AFRAID.
WHAT A WONDERFUL PRESENT
I WILL SO ENJOY UNWRAPPING IT
..RIGHT DOWN TO YOUR LIVER.
HEAD UP YOU CAN CROSS THE ROOF TOPS.
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
I'M MORE COMFORTABLE FIGHTING FLESH AND BLOOD.
GOOD LUCK TO YOU.
LIKEWISE.
JUST IN CASE, SHOULD I TELL CRAY YOU—
WE WILL BE THERE!
NOW SCOOT!

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LUTHER, OUT! WE'RE READY TO TIDY UP!
YES, YOU'RE DOING SUCH A FINE JOB OF IT
PERHAPS I DO NEED A LITTLE HELP
HENRY!!
DAD, DON'T YOU WORRY 'BOUT LITTLE LUTHER
HE'S MO-GATING IN HIGH GEAR
AND GONE LIKE LAST WEEK'S PAY
HENRY!!

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HOW THE HECK DO YOU STOP A 'LECTRIC CLOUD?
LEAVE IT TO WALTER AND EELY IT'S THEIR JOB.
LIKE I SAID, LUTHER--
GO!!!
I KNEW I'D NEVER LIKE MY DAUGHTER'S FRIENDS, BUT YOU ARE PROVING PARTICULARLY IRKSOME
--I--AM--TO PLEASE--

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OKAY, CATS, WE GOT MEBBE FIFTEEN SECONDS TO MAKE SENSE OUTTA THIS MESS.
HARLEY, WHERE THESE BIG ROCKS DEGROOT WAS GOING ON ABOUT?

*SEE "ENOUGH IS ENOUGH", 10/24/2011

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MLINSFOOORRDDD !
HARLEY!
MLINSFOORD!!
IT'S THOSE CREATURES FROM THE CAVE !
YEP.
NOT SO FAST THERE, SLICK!
GUESS YOU DIDN'T GET THE MESSAGE FROM YOUR COUSIN UGLY BUT--
--I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF THIS MAHOOFSKY.

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..YEAH... YEAH!
..YEAH YEAH --
YOWZA!
LUTHER DONE SEEN THE LIGHT!
LUTHER!
Y'ALL GO ON.
TAKE A TRIP COURTESY OF THE LUTHER PICKES SUPER DELUXE PHANDETHOGRAPHIC TRAVEL SERVICE—
NICE!
NIICE!
NIIIIIICE!
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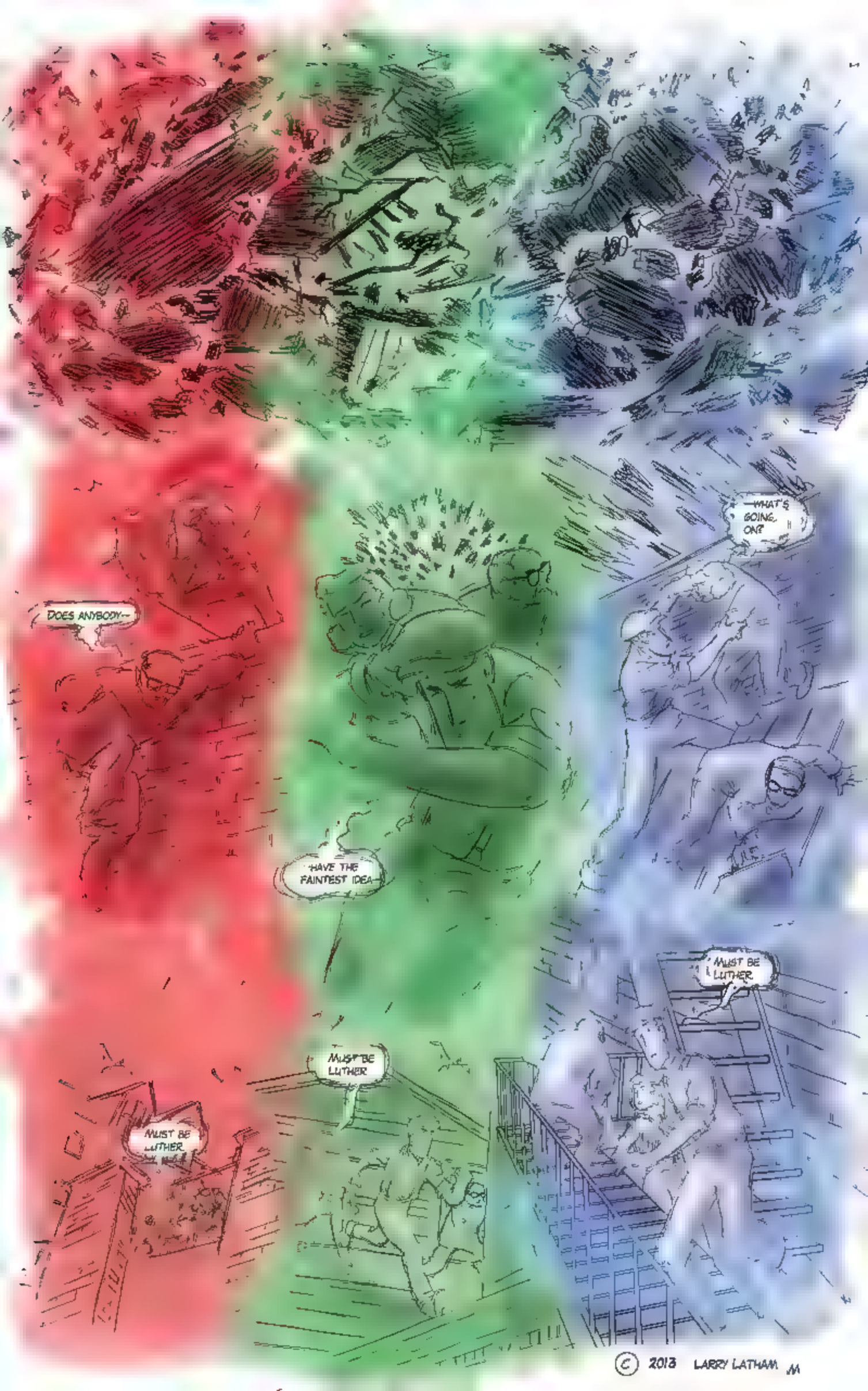

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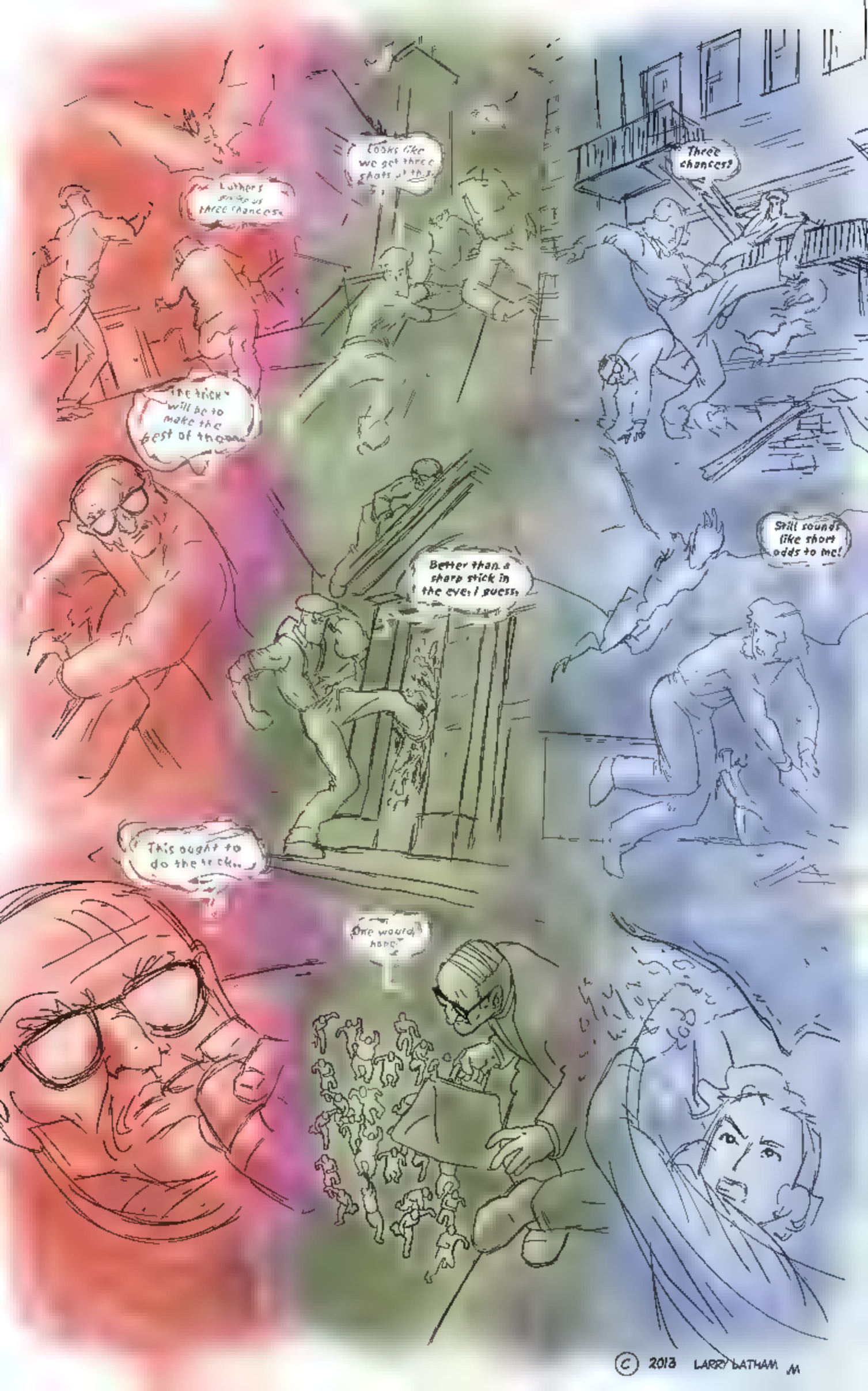
Luther's given us three chances.
Looks like we get three shots at this.
Three chances?
The trick will be to make the best of those.
Better than a sharp stick in the eye, I guess.
Still sounds like short odds to me!
This ought to do the trick.
She would have.
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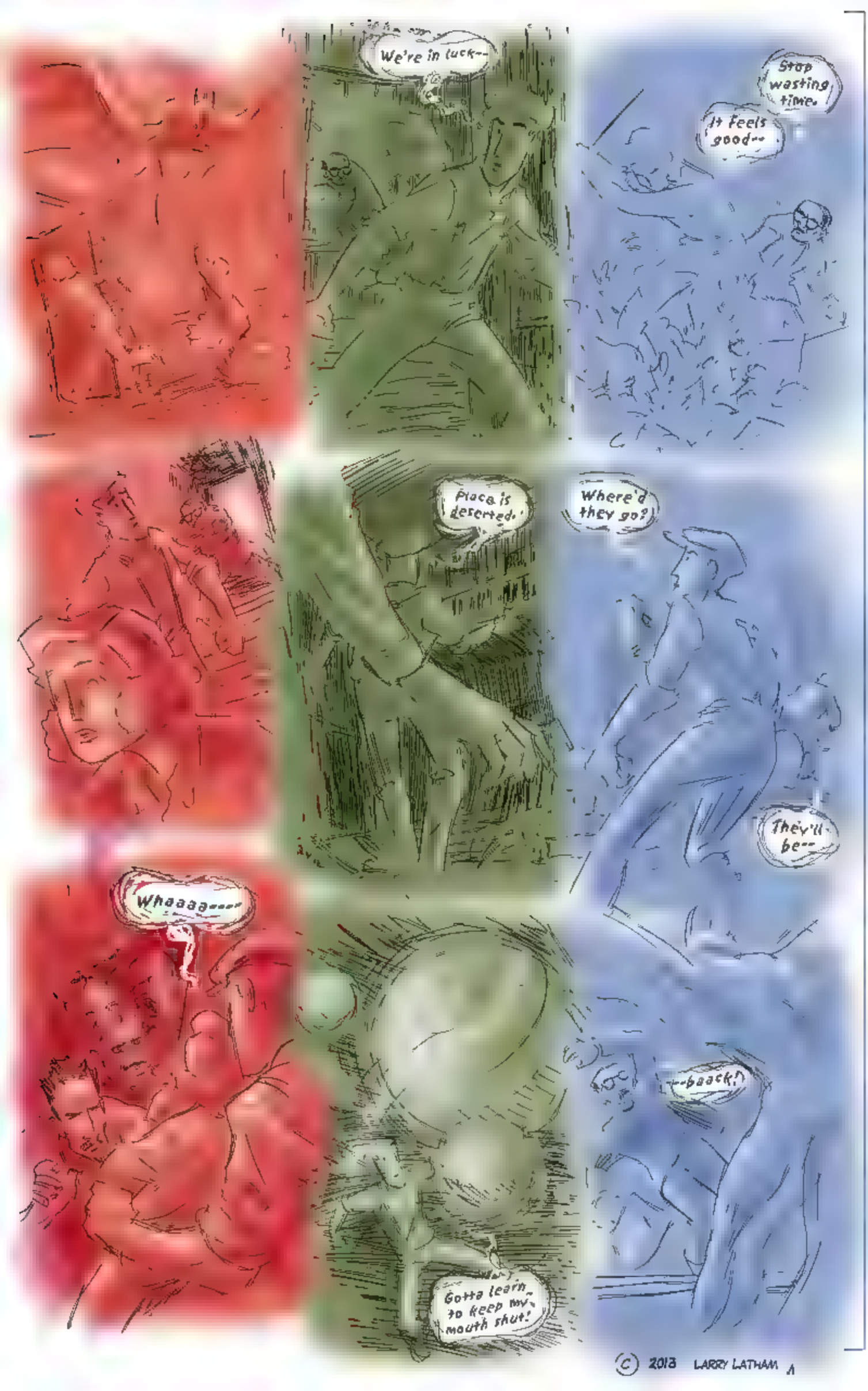

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No! Nooooo
Wife
Ooh...
Hang on I'm coming!
We've got to get inside!
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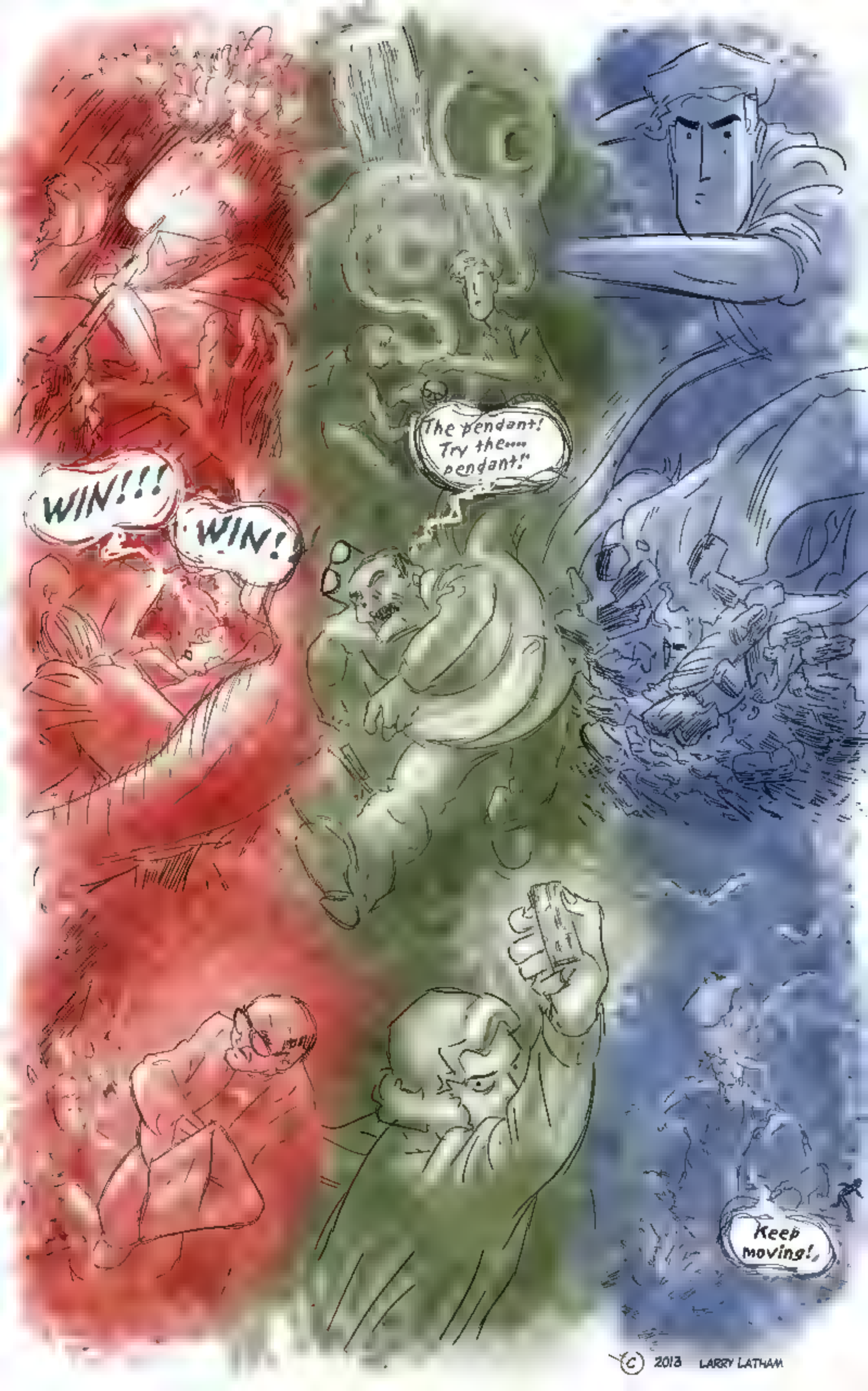

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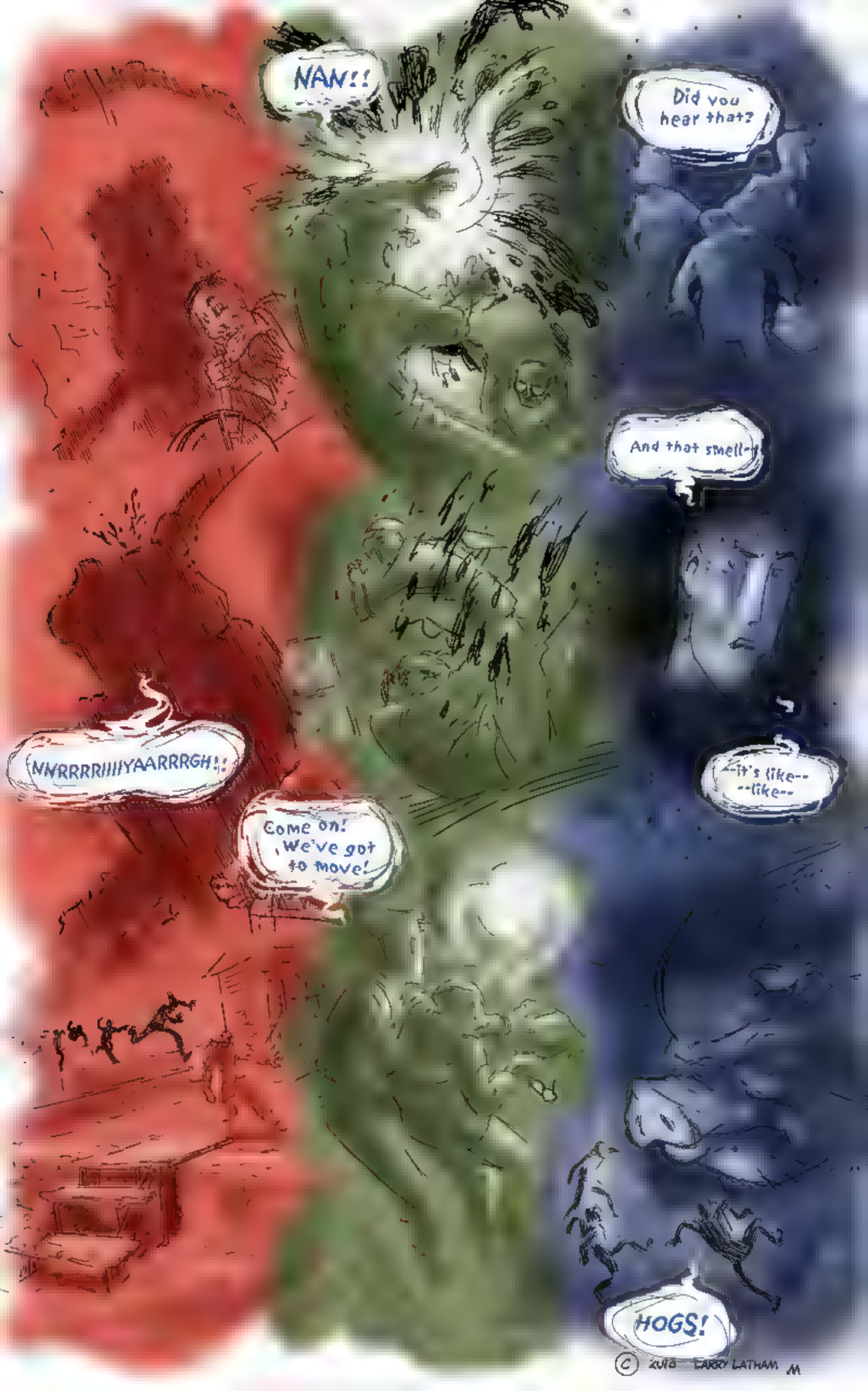

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--I know I have another--
Comin' through. I ain't got--
Run!
Both of you!
--time---to--
Unnnhhhh!
This is it, farm boy.
Looks like.
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---and say we did.
whaa---?
Maniacs at eleven o'clock, night gaunts at two...
Sounds like it's time for us--
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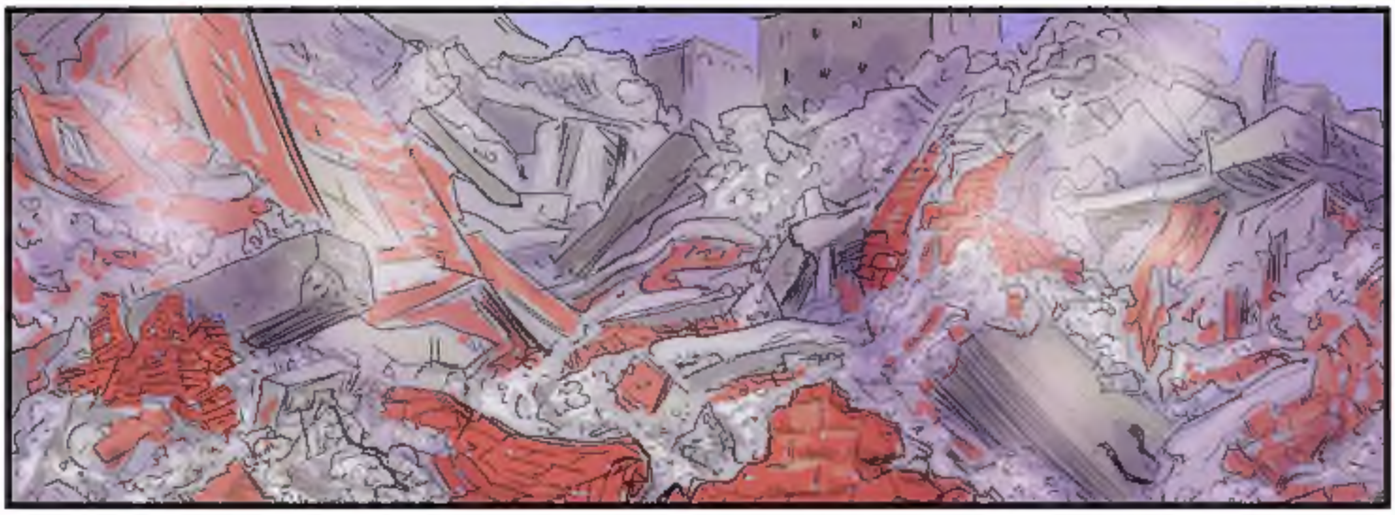

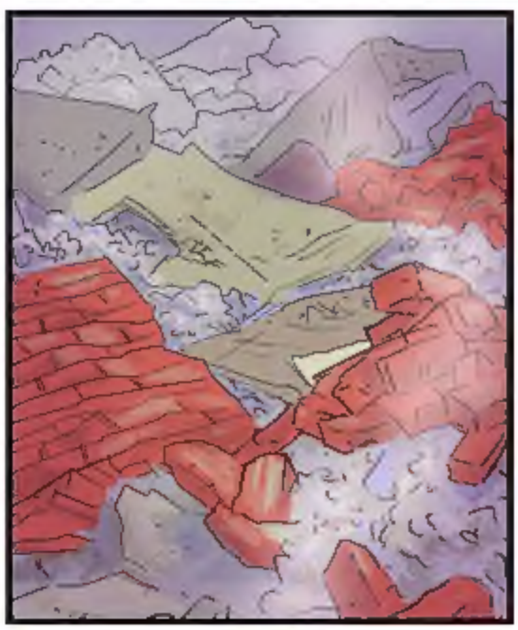

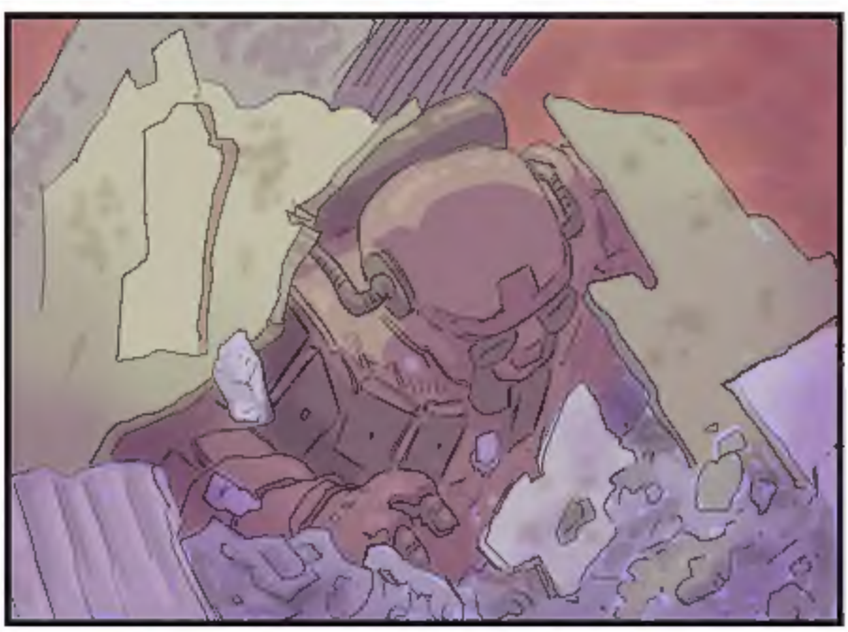

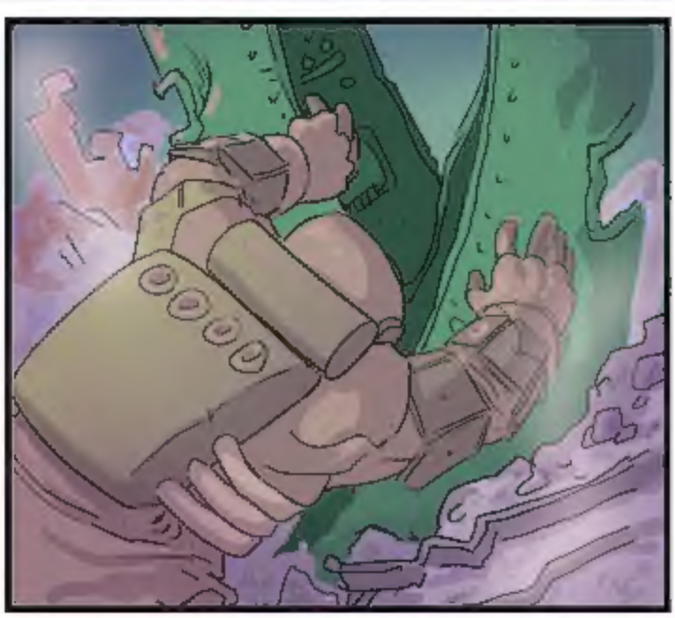

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LEGRASSE!
DAMN. GOOD MAN DOWN.
TEN LITTLE INDIANS.
NINE NOW. WE NEED FIFTY---
--DO YOU HEAR SOMETHING..?
I DO.
SOUNDS LIKE---
OOF!
---LUTHER.
WE COME OUT THE OTHER SIDE O' THIS---
I'M GONNA HAVE ME A LITTLE TALK WITH THAT PLANCK FELLA.
MEANTIME, WE GOTTA GET MOVING---
--OR WE GONNA BE LATE FOR THE END O' THE WORLD.
YOU C-CAN'T--
--BASTARD--